

A Commanding Weakness

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CHAPTER ONE

“Lieutenant Kuznetsov, you have the bridge.”

“Yes, captain!”

Captain Yvonne Vasser didn’t smile, but she did allow herself a moment of pride as her commanding officer stood at attention and, along with the rest of her bridge crew, gave her a crisp, sharp salute. It had been a long tour of duty out on the far rim of Alliance space, and she knew that standards of professionalism could easily slip. Not on her ship, though. Captain Vasser made sure of that. She didn’t mind being called a stern disciplinarian or a stone-cold bitch behind her back if it meant the *Inyx* had the finest-trained crew in the sector.

Once she stepped into the turbolift and heard its doors close behind her, though, the stalwart captain did allow her usually-immaculate posture to slip by a hair. It had been a long tour and a long shift, and while it would be poor form to let her subordinates see it, Captain Vasser was tired.

Hunting vandal-hackers on the edges of known space was a vital task, but not a pleasant one. The *Inyx* was currently on the trail of one of the most infamous, a woman known only by her callsign: Wasp. A few months before, she had hacked her way into the core servers of several major Alliance banks and had managed to wipe out trillions of credits’ worth of wealth in seconds. The economy had been sent spiraling into a downturn as a result, and Captain Vasser

had been dispatched to bring Wasp to justice.

So far, no luck. They'd had many close encounters - including one just a few hours earlier - but somehow, Wasp always managed to slip away. It was starting to seriously piss Captain Vasser off.

She needed to blow off some steam. So, as usual, after handing over command to her XO, she was headed down to the holodeck to enjoy some recreation.

"Computer, lock the holodeck," Captain Vasser commanded, stepping inside. "Hold all non-urgent communications. I don't want to be disturbed."

"Affirmative," replied the ship computer's familiar, robotic voice.

With her privacy assured, Captain Vasser could let down her hair a little - literally and otherwise. She removed the hair tie that normally held her dark hair up in a severe ponytail, and loosened the jacket of the uniform she ironed fastidiously every morning before leaving her quarters. It was an old habit - she was from a military family, after all - but it was starting to weigh on her, just like every other part of this mission.

The captain tried and failed to resist the urge to look at herself in the holodeck's strange, mirrored walls before she activated her recreation program. She wasn't getting old. Captain Vasser insisted on that, internally. Making the captain's chair in her mid-thirties was an astonishing achievement. Besides, she looked good. Captain Vasser caught her subordinates looking, sometimes. She kept in fiercely good shape, and her uniform was a neat fit. She'd never had any problems with women.

But she was certainly starting to feel old. Her cheeks were filling out under her high cheekbones, she had a new wrinkle every week, and she had big, dark patches beneath her eyes. Captain Vasser was

feeling the deep, gnawing fatigue that sometimes came with long-range deep space travel. Having a life outside of work would do wonders for her, but how was she supposed to have a life when the nearest civilized planet was seventeen parsecs away?

So, the holodeck was all Captain Vasser had. As captain, she had a generous allowance of holo-rec time - more out of courtesy than expectation, but lately, Captain Vasser had been maxing it out every single week. She wasn't proud of it, but no one would ever know, and in the privacy of the holodeck she could indulge fantasies that had no other source of release.

"Computer," Captain Vasser called. "Load up and engage scenario delta-four."

"Delta four?" the computer replied, in a voice that immediately chilled Captain Vasser's blood. It was distorted and crackling with static, and worse, inflected with distinct emotion. "I was just perusing that one. It's wild. I must have left you in a real mood, huh?"

Captain Vasser knew that voice - mostly because she kept hearing it taunting her and her crew over inter-ship comms. It was Wasp. The hacker was in their systems, and that was very, very bad.

Immediately, she went for the door. It didn't budge. "Computer, unlock the holodeck!"

"No use," Wasp taunted. "I'm in control here."

Captain Vasser slammed her palm into the communicator on her chest. "Captain to the bridge, do you read me?"

There was no reply but Wasp's impish laughter. "Nope."

"How?" Captain Vasser hissed.

“I pulled it off in our last little near-miss,” Wasp replied brightly. “When I was disrupting your tractor beam, I injected some bad code into the signal that got picked up by your ship’s internal communications system. Not easy, by the way. Kind of a genius move.”

“Then...” Captain Vasser frowned. She was no engineer, but she still knew a thing or two about how her own ship worked. “No. There’s no way something like that could get past our core firewalls. You can’t get to our life support, our propulsion, weapons, anything like that.”

“Correct!” Wasp didn’t sound the least bit discouraged. “Holodeck, though? That’s civilian shit. I figured there’d be none of your fancy military software here.”

“Which means this is meaningless,” Captain Vasser continued. “All you can do here is waste my time. Sooner or later, someone’s going to notice what’s going on. They’ll get the door open, shut down the holodeck, and purge our systems. This is pointless.”

She sighed. This was not how she wanted to spend her rec time.

“I love a girl who’s done her homework!” Wasp laughed. “But, correction: this *was* pointless. See, I was hoping I’d catch you with your pants down in the middle of something embarrassing. But all this, here in your private files? This is *sooooo* much better than I could have imagined.”

Captain Vasser took a few deep breaths to keep herself from reacting. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Ooo! Bad lie,” Wasp jeered. “Hold on. Let me get this shit booted up so we can talk face-to-face.”

There was a distinct hum as some of the hidden holographic projectors came to life. Moments later, a human figure blinked into existence a few paces in front of Captain Vasser. She recognized them, of course. She'd spent enough time staring at the woman's file. It was Wasp.

She was short. Far shorter than Captain Vasser. That had jumped out at the captain just from reading the hacker's file, but it was now even more apparent. She was wiry, too; a tiny, slim, nimble little thing, just like her namesake. For a wanted criminal, she made no effort to be discreet. Wasp wore her counterculture sympathies on her sleeves, in all manner of patches and pins and glowing electatuos. Her hair was shaved on one side, and the rest was a messy forest of spikes, tufts, and untidy braids, all of which were unceremoniously swept over to one side. The hacker's clothing was just as punk; it bothered Captain Vasser, for some reason, that this woman had evaded her for so long when she couldn't seem to wear a jacket that wasn't three sizes too large.

Wasp looked around before staring straight at Captain Vasser and licking her pierced lips, blue eyes shining with amusement.

Captain Vasser couldn't help it. She took a swing.

Wasp laughed as the captain's fist passed straight through her holographic face. "I'm not here, remember? And I wouldn't give you the pleasure of a hardlight punching bag."

"Enough games! Let me out of here," Captain Vasser commanded, a little too urgently. "Or I'll make you regret it. You're already a criminal, but there's always a harder way we can do things."

"Wow," Wasp snorted. "That might actually be intimidating if I didn't know you were really just trying to keep me out of your dirty laundry."

“Nonsense,” Captain Vasser snarled. “I don’t have any dirty laundry. You’re wasting your time as well as mine.”

“I dunno,” Wasp replied, in an infuriating sing-song voice. “Some of this stuff is *really* embarrassing, captain. Pretty disguised, too. I can understand why you wouldn’t want anyone peeking into your privacy.”

“So that’s it. You’re trying to blackmail me.” Captain Vasser kept her voice even, despite the way her heart was pounding. “It won’t work. There’s no prohibited material in my holodeck files, and I trust in my crew. Whatever someone uses their rec time for is their business. Everyone understands that. They won’t judge. And even if they did, I’d die before betraying them.”

That sounded good, she thought. But Captain Vasser’s bravado deflated a little when Wasp’s smile didn’t budge.

“I know I’m getting too predictable when even someone like you can guess my plans.” Wasp sighed theatrically, before letting her face settle back into a crooked smirk. “Well, yeah, that was the plan. *Was*. Threatening to expose someone’s porny little fantasies is one of those old tricks that never really gets old. But when I saw what you were into, I got curious enough to watch some of the logs. And that gave me a way, *way* better idea.”

Captain Vasser didn’t know exactly what the hacker was referring to, but couldn’t shake the feeling that she was in danger. “What?”

Wasp winked mischievously and, in a burst of static, her clothing transformed. Suddenly she was wearing scrubs and a long doctor’s coat, with a stethoscope hanging around her neck. Captain Vasser rolled her eyes at the theatrics.

“Tell me, captain,” Wasp said, “how does this make you feel?”

Now the holodeck around them truly came to life, and the walls collapsed into huge, swirling spirals.

“Wha-“ Captain Vasser cut herself off in surprise. A wave of dizziness hit her, and she wished she could tell herself it was just holodeck legs. Her instinct was to close her eyes, but she refused to give Wasp the satisfaction.

“I knew it!” Wasp cackled gleefully and made a big show of writing something down on a clipboard she was suddenly holding. “What a delightful little kink for a starship captain. I’m well-acquainted with it, actually.”

“I-I don’t know what you’re talking about,” Captain Vasser tried to insist. It was difficult to sound convincing when she had to try so hard not to stare into the spirals that were all around her.

“Oh, drop it!” Wasp snorted. “What? Did all this trashy hypno porn fall off the back of a truck or something? Anyway, it makes perfect sense.”

Without warning, Wasp’s holographic clothing shifted again. In the blink of an eye, she was wearing a turtleneck sweater and thick-rimmed glasses, and when she threw herself to one side, a psychoanalyst’s couch appeared to catch her.

“A high-strung, domineering captain like you?” the hacker went on. “It’s only natural to crave a little submissive spice in your downtime. And what could be better than not having to think at all, right? And all the other stuff, well... I’m guessing you had a pretty repressed upbringing too. Spacefleet brat, et cetera. It’s always fun seeing how that comes out.”

“Shut up!” Captain Vasser yelled. She was long past the end of her patience. “You have a point? A plan? Then get to it, before I knock myself out just to be rid of your inane chatter.”

That seemed to amuse Wasp most of all. “Jeez, you’re no fun! Not yet anyway... fine, fine. Here it is: I’m gonna hypnotize you, Captain Yvonne Vasser.”

Captain Vasser paused, then blinked, then snorted derisively. “No. You’re not.”

“Cocky, huh?” Wasp licked her lips. “Extra fun.”

“You’re insane if you believe I would allow you to hypnotize me, whatever I do in my recreation time.”

“Oh, I never said anything about you *allowing* me.” Wasp licked her lips again.

“That’s ridiculous.” Captain Vasser fully believed that, but something about Wasp’s smug conviction kept her uneasy. “That simply isn’t how it works - as you should know, if you’re as familiar as you claim. This isn’t a corny movie, Wasp. You can’t hypnotize someone against their will.”

“Yeah?” Wasp jeered. Her grin could only be described as devilish. “Then why do you need to try so hard not to stare at the spirals?”

“I...” Captain Vasser frowned. Why *was* she feeling so dizzy? “What... you! You’re doing something.”

She looked at the floor, which was mercifully still stationary. Wasp, though, wasn’t one to miss a sign of weakness.

“Am I? You don’t seem so sure.” The hacker leaped back to her feet. “What’s the matter, captain? Feeling a little sleepy?”

“No.”

Wasp laughed. With her eyes fixed to the floor Captain Vasser could only see the hacker's feet as she got closer. "Well, not like that, maybe! You're afraid instead, aren't you? C'mon, captain. Don't you trust yourself? Your own willpower? Look. Look at the pretty spirals already. Don't you want to win and rub it in my face?"

"Shut up."

Captain Vasser took a moment to breathe slowly and center herself. She was in a dangerous situation, and in the presence of an enemy. She could trust all of her training to keep her alert and on edge. With that thought fixed firmly in her mind, she looked upwards, into the heart of one of the spirals that surrounded her.

Immediately, her mind and body betrayed her. Her legs started to give way, and it felt like the floor beneath her was melting into jelly. Gravity seemed to shift, and Captain Vasser had to suppress the instinct telling her that she was about to fall forward, beyond the spiral's event horizon.

Why couldn't she fight this?

"Like I said, I watched some of your sessions," Wasp said, sensing her confusion. "And I noticed how into it you were. In particular, I noticed how deep you went, and how quickly. That got me curious. So I decided to look at your stats. I was wondering how many times you'd been down here, hypnotizing yourself. Know what I found?"

"I... don't... know..." Captain Vasser didn't know how to fight what was happening to her. Her thoughts were slowing to a crawl, and they were stuck on sheer disbelief.

Hypnosis was just a fetish. A guilty pleasure. It was something she'd indulged in for years - ever since she was a teenager. Always discreetly, always without telling anyone. How could it be leading to

this?

“One hundred and eighty-four times,” Wasp continued. “That’s how many times you’ve looked at this exact spiral, captain, and it’s far from the only one you’ve been enjoying. What do you think that does to you? You seem to be having a hard time answering my questions, so allow me to go ahead and speculate. I think you’ve conditioned yourself.”

Conditioned. That word, deeply charged for Captain Vasser, sent a shiver down her spine. She hated that the thought turned her on.

“Eroding your willpower, bit by bit.” As Captain Vasser was transfixed by the spiral, Wasp danced behind her, leaning over to whisper in the helpless woman’s ear. “Training yourself to succumb so very easily to the right images and the right situations. Working yourself deeper into delightfully perverted little niches. My dear captain, it took me a little while to realize it, but there’s quite the treasure trove here in your holodeck files. It’s the skeleton key to your pretty little head.”

“N-no,” Captain Vasser replied in a quiet, distant voice, twitching as Wasp’s words ran through her. The kind of lurid defeat Wasp was describing was uncomfortably close to some of her deepest, most forbidden fantasies. She knew it was wrong to be turned on by it, but the part of her that was turned on was deeper than morality or propriety. “I... I won’t...”

“You will,” Wasp teased. “You totally will. Whatever you’re thinking of, you will. Anything I want. I’ll make sure of it. I admit, I’m not really the ‘planning’ type of girl. I’m usually way too impulsive for my own good. But you? You’re going to be way too useful not to make big plans with - once I make you mine, anyway.”

“I... won’t!” Captain Vasser insisted. She tried her hardest to hold on to that one thought, to make it the core of her being. “I’m not

yours. I won't be."

"My, my." Wasp made a sound like she was savoring a delicious meal. "This is the captain who's been on my ass for months, huh? I hope you keep all that fire, baby. It'll come in useful. And besides, it gets me kinda hot."

"I am going to catch you," Captain Vasser vowed. Wasp was making her angry. That was good. Anger was something she could focus on besides the spiral. "I'm going to catch you and bring you to justice. I'll make you pay for everything you've done. I'll make sure you can never get within reach of another computer ever again for as long as you live."

"OK, OK!" Wasp held up her hands and stepped back in front of Captain Vasser. "I would have been disappointed if one little spiral vid was enough to break you. I think it'll be a whole lot more effective in context. Time to get serious. Let's run through one of those delightfully specific scenarios you've got tucked away. It's so hard to pick but... how about this one?"

Now the holodeck truly came to life. The spirals vanished, and the entire room around Captain Vasser seemed to phase out of existence. Moments later, the holodeck created the world anew. It conjured a perfect simulacrum of Earth, right down to the taste of the air and the sensation of the wind on the captain's skin. Normally, it was a moment she loved to savor, but this time the familiarity was alarming. Captain Vasser knew this place, which meant she knew what was going to happen.

It was the Fleet Academy, on Earth. The place Captain Vasser had received both her basic training and her captain's stripes, just like every other recruit. On her instructions, the *Inyx's* computer had created and saved a loving recreation, right down to every last blade of grass. Right now, she was standing on one of the many paths that crisscrossed the open green spaces on campus. Captain Vasser had

stood on that spot more times in simulations than she had in real life. It was one of her favorite holodeck scenarios. Which meant-

“Excuse me, Captain Vasser. Could I get a moment of your time?”

It was Wasp, jogging towards her across the grass. This time, she was dressed in a tight-fitting recruit’s uniform. It didn’t look right on the punk hacker at all. None of this was right. This was one of Captain Vasser’s fantasies, but she wasn’t in control anymore.

Of course. I’m always happy to help an interested student. That was what she usually said, and it was such a familiar script that she found the words perched on her lips. Instead of speaking them, though, the captain found that she was paralyzed. This was like being in a dream she couldn’t wake up from, and the most torturous part was how crazy turned on she was by it. She couldn’t help. Captain Vasser could feel herself growing wet from sheer, conditioned anticipation.

“I just saw your presentation,” Wasp said. She was delivering the scripted lines perfectly, but with mockery written on her face. “I recently joined the officer track. It was amazing! I really look up to you, captain. I was actually hoping you could take a look at something for me.”

She lifted the dataslate she was holding in one hand. Even before she looked at it, Captain Vasser was feeling dizzy. She couldn’t let this happen to her.

“Computer!” she called out desperately. “Pause scenario!”

There was no reply. Wasp was in charge.

I just have to stay in control, Captain Vasser told herself. You can’t be hypnotized against your will. I don’t want to be hypnotized. I will remain awake. I will remain the master of my own mind. I will not let this criminal have the pleasure of putting me into a trance. I

will not-

Wasp turned the dataslate towards Captain Vasser for her to look at. On it was a blaring, spinning spiral. Automatically, Captain Vasser stared straight at it. An instant later, her shoulders slumped and her tongue lolled out of her mouth. Her eyes lost focus, and the simulated world around her disappeared into a blurred haze - all except for the spiral.

She was hypnotized.

Wasp laughed, and her eyes sparkled with gleeful arousal. "Oh my god. The famous Captain Vasser couldn't even hold out for ten seconds. That's amazing. How many times have you gotten yourself off to this exact situation, huh? A hundred times? More?"

Captain Vasser couldn't answer her. Her thoughts were all draining away, and words turned into dumb, drooling moans on her lips before she could speak them. Through the fog of hypnosis, the only thing she managed to remain conscious of was the bitter, humiliating lick of defeat.

"It's a cute little fantasy, don't get me wrong," Wasp giggled. "Hot for student? I can see the appeal. And I just *love* some of the things you have them do to you next."

Captain Vasser tried to mount any kind of protest - a cry, an insult, a growl of rage. All that came out of her mouth was a muted whine that prompted yet more giggles from her tormentor.

"Normally, I'd get creative," Wasp mused. "But that seems pointless when right here in your computer systems, I have a wonderful list of all the right buttons to push. Oh, and, by the way? Congrats on the trigger you gave yourself for this scenario in particular. Irony is just delicious." She cleared her throat. "Captain, take your jacket off for me. *That's an order.*"

The trigger phrase hit Captain Vasser like a gut punch. It was meant to be a twist of the knife - a mere recruit with a talent for hypnosis using her military training against her - and it bit all the deeper when the one wielding it was a hated enemy. Immediately, Captain Vasser was just itching to obey. Her hands twitched and elbows tensed as her sole overriding instinct became lifting her top off over her head.

It was only Wasp's infuriating, smug face that allowed her to stop herself halfway through. Captain Vasser was a fighter. Whatever else she was, that remained true. She wasn't going to let this woman beat her so easily.

"Aw, c'mon." Wasp pouted, although it was only a moment before a grin returned to her face. "Gonna make me work for it, huh? Fine by me."

She took a step forwards, bringing the dataslate with the spiral closer to Captain Vasser's face.

"Look deeper," she urged, her voice suddenly becoming alarmingly soft and seductive. "Deep breaths, remember? In, and out. In, and out. Just like that. It's perfectly natural, right? Second nature, at this point."

"N-no," Captain Vasser whispered, trance drawing her voice out into a sleepy drawl.

"Yes," Wasp coaxed. "You can do it, babygirl. Nice, deep breaths. Just like you've practiced. You've done this so many times. It's automatic. And I bet you can feel it working. A fetishist like you? You know the signs."

Captain Vasser could. It was undeniable. She whimpered. "Won't... let you... hypnotize me."

"I'm not hypnotizing you," Wasp said sweetly.

Confused, Captain Vasser blinked sluggishly.

"You're hypnotizing yourself," Wasp said softly. "You programmed all this, captain. This place. This spiral. This defeat. It's all by you, for you. You spent so much time here in the holodeck, refining it bit by bit to make it more effective. You did this, captain. You can fight me, but you can't fight yourself. So go ahead and sink. *That's an order.*"

Why is that so fucking hot? That was the last independent thought Captain Vasser could manage before the trigger took hold of her. She was forced to let go of her resistance, and when she did, the hacker's earlier command won out. Captain Vasser slipped out of her uniform jacket and discarded it to the ground.

"Perfect," Wasp purred. Her wicked, impish demeanor was such an insidious contrast with the recruit's uniform she was wearing. It was exactly the kind of personality Captain Vasser liked to give to her simulated hypnotists. "Nice body, captain. I can tell you keep yourself in good shape. And lingerie, under the uniform? That's the perfect present for me to unwrap."

If Captain Vasser hadn't slumped so deeply into trance, she would have been embarrassed. When she had holodeck time, she liked wearing something a little daring under her uniform. It made her feel sexy. No one had ever known, until now.

"What should I do with you now?" Wasp mused. "It's almost too much! I feel like a kid at Christmas. We can get to the serious stuff later. For now, I just want to make sure to leave a nice, deep impression on you. I think I have the perfect idea, judging from all the kinky scenarios in your private collection."

Wasp snapped her fingers. The instant she did, a large bench appeared right behind her, for her to throw herself back onto. Lounging back, she crossed her feet at the ankles. All the better to draw Captain Vasser's attention to the other thing that had just changed: her footwear.

Suddenly, Wasp was wearing a pair of tall, shiny, rubber, platform ballet boots.

Captain Vasser gasped.

"Oh wow." Wasp uncrossed and re-crossed her ankles. "That certainly had an impact."

Captain Vasser couldn't say anything. She was utterly transfixed. Along with hypnosis, this was her most devastating Achilles' heel.

"Who knew that the captain of the *Inyx* had such an embarrassing little fetish?" Wasp giggled. "What would your crew think, hm? I'm delighted that you're into something so direct. So base. So... so porny. It's such a fun little string to tug on, for a woman of your station."

Protest was so far beyond the starship captain. The trance kept her mind placid and still, but her body was responding eagerly to Wasp's provocation. Captain Vasser could feel herself flushing hot, and a telltale wetness was growing between her legs. Her weak, whimpering moans were coming out wet and needy as drool started to pool on her lips.

"Oh my god," Wasp laughed. She uncrossed her ankles again. To Captain Vasser, the way the light played on the shiny rubber as she moved was every bit as hypnotic as the spiral. "Don't worry. I'm not going to make you beg for it. I'm much more interested in simply watching you fall. Go ahead, captain. Do as your twisted little heart desires. *That's an order.*"

Captain Vasser didn't hesitate for even an instant. She threw herself down onto her knees and put her face less than an inch away from Wasp's gorgeous boots. Then, she paused for a moment, and closed her eyes so that she could savor the familiar scent of rubber and polish. For her, the scent was always more visceral than the sight, no matter how gorgeous she found boots like these. It was like Pavlov's bell. Captain Vasser's drool started spilling over her lips and trickling down her face.

Then, she opened her mouth, leaned forward, and kissed.

This time, Wasp had used hardlight. Captain Vasser could feel the boot under her lips, just as real as if it had been truly there, and in the moment she failed to feel anything other than pathetic gratitude for the indulgence. This was what she craved. She craved it all day long, until she could seal herself away in the holodeck and give in to her fetishes. It was just like Wasp had said. Captain Vasser had trained herself to respond this way.

She'd trained herself to lose to spirals and boots.

Captain Vasser started to worship. 'Worship' was the term she always used in her head. It was the hottest one she could think of, and the one that best fit. The way she started to kiss and lick Wasp's boots was slow and reverent. She took her time as she worked her way across their surface, kissing every little spot with loving devotion before drawing her tongue over them in long, lapping strokes like she was trying to polish them herself. It was a slow, methodical process, but to Captain Vasser it was anything but boring. To her, every moment was heaven, and with each second that passed she could feel herself growing steadily wetter and more aroused. The sound of Wasp's ringing laughter was, to her shame, just another part of the fantasy she was losing herself in.

"Amazing," Wasp purred. She made no secret of the fact she was

turned on too. "I never could have dreamt I'd get you like this, captain, but it's so good to know that being treated this way is exactly what you want, deep down. Now - the heels."

The hacker turned her feet, pushing the heels of her tall boots toward Captain Vasser. The captain didn't flinch, just parted her lips and took one of the heels into her mouth, felling the length of rubber as best she could.

"Fuck," Wasp breathed. "I can't tell you how good you look like this. I'm gonna get a lot of use out of all the pics I'm saving. Just imagine if that cute second-in-command you've got saw this. The other heel, now."

Captain Vasser obeyed. She switched over to the other heel, leaving the first one slick with her saliva. She lavished the second one with equally devoted attention but almost choked when Wasp pushed forward, shoving the heel into her throat.

"C'mon, captain," she jeered. "You can take it."

Hypnosis kept her gag reflex suppressed, but even so, Captain Vasser struggled to accommodate the pointed heel of Wasp's ballet boots, especially as Wasp moved and pushed and jostled her around. The hypnotized captain fought to take as much of it as she could, kissing her way along its length, but in the process, she ended up with her drool smeared messily all the way down her own face. Wasp laughed at the sight of the captain's blank, entranced face being violated and defiled.

"Nice clean boots at last," she sighed contentedly. "I guess you military types are good for something after all. Though I see you're making a fine mess of yourself in the process."

Even through trance, Captain Vasser felt a faint pulse of shame. She could feel that her uniform pants were soaked through with her

own juices, and clinging embarrassingly to her thighs.

“My poor little captain needs some attention, huh?” Wasp mocked. “Show me how you usually get yourself off in this scenario, captain. *That’s an order.*”

Captain Vasser squirmed and twitched a little from the sheer humiliation of the command, but her obedience was still immediate. She raised herself up onto her knees, pressed herself against the boot Wasp extended forwards, and started to hump it.

Immediately, the holodeck was filled with the sound of Captain Vasser’s loud, lewd moans. Until she felt the tip of Wasp’s boot grinding against her cunt, the captain hadn’t realized just how incredibly sensitive she was. Trance had made her numb, but now all of that sensation came roaring back, along with blistering heat and even more urgent need. Instinct took hold, and she started bucking her hips automatically in search of more stimulation. Captain Vasser needed to cum so badly, and Wasp’s command only heightened her desperation.

“Oh my god!” Wasp exclaimed, laughing. “Look at you. The great Captain Yvonne Vasser, fucking herself on her target’s foot, reduced to nothing more than a mewling, brainwashed bootslut. Are you really that weak to this, huh?”

Captain Vasser could only nod. It was undeniable. She felt like nothing more than a dumb, rutting animal. Shiny, tall boots always did this to her. She didn’t know why. She didn’t know how she got such an intense fetish. But something about them was a lightning bolt straight into the stupidest, horniest part of her reptile brain. This wasn’t the first time she’d cum this way. Each time, it got easier and easier and better and better. Each time, she got more and more hooked on the fetish. But this was the first time someone else had seen her do it, and that humiliating knowledge made all her pleasure burn ten times as bright.

“Captain,” Wasp mocked, “you’re making a mess of my boot again. All your hard work undone! I guess I’ll have to make you clean it again.”

The captain was beyond replying with anything more than wordless moaning. This was too much. She was already cumming, but she couldn’t stop. Her body needed more, so she kept rutting and bucking and humping, no free will left in her head to consider how utterly pathetic it was. Each time Captain Vasser moved back and forth, there was a distinct wet noise from how utterly soaked the front of her uniform was. Each time, it was a reminder of how badly she’d lost.

Under hypnosis, Captain Vasser didn’t care. She just kept cumming her brains out over Wasp’s boot.

Eventually, Wasp drew her foot back. “Alright, that’s enough,” she said. “I’m not the kind of girl to outstay my welcome. There’s a few bored technicians poking around, and I wouldn’t want your people to figure out I’m in their systems. That would ruin everything.”

Captain Vasser rocked back, then stopped. Her head was emptier than ever. Pleasure had robbed her of every last thought, and all she could do was twitch unsteadily from the aftershocks of her countless orgasms. Wasp had long since put the dataslate down, but she could still see the spiral spinning in her mind’s eye.

“Stand up,” Wasp ordered. Captain Vasser obeyed. Wasp looked at her thoughtfully. “I can’t resist,” the hacker added. “One more for the road. Captain, give me a salute. *That’s an order.*”

Captain Vasser had no strength left in her body, but the trigger took hold all the same. Her muscles came to life and, as her back stiffened, her arm snapped upwards in a crisp salute. Wasp watched her admiringly and, as some semblance of intelligent thought

returned to the captain, it dawned on her what she must look like.

She was hypnotized. Her eyes were blank and unfocused, and her face slack. Her jacket had been removed, exposing lingerie, and what was left of her uniform was completely and hopelessly defiled by her own arousal. She smelt of sex, and she was flushed and twitching like she'd just been fucked. And to make all that so much worse, she was saluting in a depraved parody of military discipline

Captain Vasser no longer had the fight left in her to consider it all anything but devastatingly hot.

"Perfect," Wasp nodded, grinning. "Now listen up, captain. *That's an order.* I need to explain how you're going to forget all about this, and what you're going to do the next time you come calling."

* * *

Doctor Hiraga couldn't help but tap her feet impatiently as she waited outside the holodeck. She was eager to enjoy her slot of rec time, but the deck was currently in use. Whoever was in there was running late, and that was strange because according to the schedule, the person in there was the captain. It wasn't like the captain to be late for anything. She'd have to ask her if everything was OK at her next physical.

Abruptly, the door slid open. Doctor Hiraga made ready to salute, but what she saw stopped her in her tracks.

Captain Vasser looked utterly disheveled. There was no other word for it. Her top looked distinctly crumpled, and there was a huge, suggestive stain on the front of her pants. Her hair was an uncharacteristic mess, and she greeted Doctor Hiraga with a blank stare. It was like she was in some kind of daze.

“Captain?” Doctor Hiraga ventured uncertainly.

A little light seemed to return to Captain Vasser’s eyes. That would have been reassuring, had it not been for the fact that the captain seemed completely unaware that there was anything amiss. Doctor Hiraga would have expected something - an apology, an explanation, even a show of embarrassment. Instead, Captain Vasser just nodded to her.

“Greetings, Doctor,” she said mechanically. “Enjoy your recreation.”

With that, she marched off in the direction of her quarters. Doctor Hiraga stared after her in disbelief.

She was going to have to see if she could find out what Captain Vasser was using her holodeck time for.

CHAPTER TWO

There was something weird going on with Captain Vasser.

That was the starting point Doctor Yuzuko Hiraga kept coming back to, as she anxiously reviewed her notes whilst waiting for the captain to come and visit her in the *Inyx's* medbay. It wasn't a lot to go on, frustratingly, but it was a conviction that had been growing within her ever since she'd caught sight of Captain Vasser leaving the holodeck a week before. She'd tried to dismiss the feeling a hundred times, but she just couldn't. Deep down, she knew it.

There was something weird going on with Captain Vasser.

She had seemed so unlike herself when Dr. Hiraga had seen her that day, overstaying on her holo-rec time. For one, the captain she knew would never, ever lose track of time. She was far too strict, especially with herself. And for another, Captain Vasser wouldn't be caught dead looking so messy and disheveled. Even that could have been dismissed as a rare, momentary lapse, but what truly bothered Dr. Hiraga was how she had seemed so oblivious to it. It was as if she'd been in some kind of strange daze.

It wasn't normal and it wasn't right. As the ship's doctor, Dr. Hiraga needed to get to the bottom of it - but discreetly. The last thing she wanted was to publicly undermine Captain Vasser.

And so, she had privately asked Captain Vasser to attend a medical appointment in the hopes that she could get a feel for what

was wrong.

Dr. Hiraga adjusted her thick-rimmed glasses one more time, and then tried to sit still behind her desk and look like she had been in the middle of something unimportant.

With a muted, familiar hiss, the medbay's doors slid open, and through them walked Captain Yvonne Vasser, looking as formidable as ever in her neat, perfectly-tailored uniform.

"Doctor," the captain said, favoring Dr. Hiraga with a small smile. "Let's make this quick, shall we?"

"Of course, captain."

Dr. Hiraga beckoned for Captain Vasser to take a seat. Seeing her like this, it was all but impossible to imagine her as anything other than an invulnerable pillar of dignity and professionalism. Her hair was, as usual, in a stern ponytail, and her gaze betrayed no hint of the nerves and anxiety Dr. Hiraga was used to seeing in her patients.

It was almost enough to make her doubt herself. Nothing was ever wrong with Captain Vasser, right? Simply being in her presence was a comfort. Dr. Hiraga knew that some of the *Inyx's* crew were afraid of her. They thought of her as a haughty, terrifyingly-perfect, disciplinarian robot of a captain. But to Dr. Hiraga, Captain Vasser was simply perfect.

"So," Captain Vasser began, "what's this all about?"

Dr. Hiraga adjusted her glasses nervously. "I've decided to set up some appointments with the senior crew. We all know it's been a long tour out here on the rim, chasing after Wasp. There's a lot of pressure on officers like Lieutenant Kuznetsov and Chief Carter to not let standards slip. I thought it might be helpful to discuss mental health and wellness in a professional context."

“That’s very diligent, doctor,” Captain Vasser commented approvingly.

“T-thank you.” Dr. Hiraga’s heart skipped a beat, and she silently prayed that she wasn’t blushing. “So, um, I thought: where better to start than the captain?”

“How thoughtful.” Captain Vasser laughed politely. “But I’m afraid I don’t think we’ll have much to talk about.”

When Captain Vasser laughed like that, her whole face lit up. Her eyes sparkled. To Dr. Hiraga, it was a rare, precious moment, like catching a sunset. Captain Vasser never let her guard down around her subordinates, but with a doctor, in a private setting, it was a little different. It made Dr. Hiraga feel blessed, and she had to pause to bask in the moment.

The feeling it gave her, though, was also an uncomfortable reminder of why she felt so conflicted about what she was doing.

Dr. Hiraga had a massive crush on Captain Vasser.

It was embarrassing. Mortifying. Completely and totally unprofessional. What kind of doctor developed feelings for someone under her care? Worse, the captain of her ship! There were a hundred reasons nothing would ever come of it even if Captain Vasser returned her affections - which would have been nothing short of a miracle, Dr. Hiraga was sure. She was just a boring doctor. How would she ever catch the eye of a woman like Captain Vasser?

Her feelings made navigating situations like these difficult, to say the least. It was difficult to act like a professional when simply being in Captain Vasser’s presence reduced the doctor to a blushing schoolgirl. She was thirty-four, for goodness’ sake! She needed to pull herself together.

And, more pointedly, it made her seriously worried about her professional judgment when she was considering prying into Captain Vasser's personal affairs.

"Doctor?" Captain Vasser ventured.

Dr. Hiraga started nervously when she realized she'd been zoning out. She tried to cover her blush by adjusting her glasses. "Yes! Um... well, that is, I wanted to ask... have you been feeling alright recently?"

Captain Vasser smiled politely at her. "Yes, of course."

"Nothing on your mind?" Dr. Hiraga prompted hopefully. "Nothing's bothering you? Nothing you'd care to get off your chest?"

Captain Vasser shook her head. "I'm perfectly fine, doctor."

Dr. Hiraga paused for a moment to judge her next move. It was very tempting to just let the whole thing go, but she knew her curiosity would keep eating at her.

"Captain, please don't take this the wrong way," she began hesitantly, "but I happened to notice that you've been spending an awful lot of time in the holodeck recently. That's your right, of course. It's your ship. But... it's unusual for you. And sometimes, when I see crew members doing this, it can be an indication of serious stress. Of trying to get away from reality."

Dr. Hiraga couldn't bear to continue. She just hoped the captain wasn't too angry at her. Mercifully, though, Captain Vasser just cocked an eyebrow, amused.

"Been checking the holodeck logs, have we, doctor?" she asked.

Dr. Hiraga blushed. “W-well, in this instance, it’s simply part of my job. I didn’t mean to-“

“It’s quite alright.” Captain Vasser held up a hand. “There’s no harm in seeing who’s using the holodeck. It’s not as though you can see what they’re doing with it. And I understand your intentions. Doctor, any ship would be lucky to have a medical officer with your level of care and attention.”

Dr. Hiraga’s blush deepened, although her joy at being complimented by the captain was undercut by her guilt at how dishonest she was being.

“In my case, though, it’s nothing to worry about,” Captain Vasser continued. “I’ve just been sinking my teeth into a little project lately. I thought it would be wise to pick up a hobby, especially since it’s been so long since our last encounter with the hacker we’re chasing. Wouldn’t you agree?”

“O-oh, right,” Doctor Hiraga replied. “Y-yes, of course. Very, um, healthy.”

She felt like a fool. A new hobby? That made perfect sense. It was obvious, really. She’d probably been worrying about nothing.

“So, will there be anything else?” Captain Vasser asked.

“No, I don’t think so.” Dr. Hiraga tried to put on a brave face and maintain her professional demeanor, smiling as the two of them stood. “I just wanted to check in, that’s all. Although please remember: my door is always open, captain.”

“Thank you, doctor,” Captain Vasser replied warmly, before leaving medbay to return to her duties.

Dr. Hiraga sighed as she sank back down into her chair. What was she going to do now?

* * *

Hours later, at the end of her duty shift, Captain Vasser was still playing on Dr. Hiraga's mind. At first, her explanation seemed to clear everything up, but now the doctor wasn't so sure. A new hobby didn't explain why she'd looked so disheveled and acted so strangely that day she'd seen the captain leaving the holodeck. It was such a small thing, but Dr. Hiraga couldn't quite let it go. Her gut was telling her something. There had to be an explanation. A reason. There had to be.

It was still tormenting her when, just as she was leaving medbay, the communicator she wore on her chest started to beep.

She tapped the badge at once, fully alert. "This is the doctor. Is there a medical emergency?"

"No, doctor, don't worry." The sound of the captain's voice sent a chill down Dr. Hiraga's spine. "I know you've just come off duty, and I was actually hoping you might be able to do me a small favor. In a... personal capacity."

Dr. Hiraga's heart skipped a beat. "O-of course!"

"Wonderful," Captain Vasser said over the communicator. "Then, could you please come to the holodeck? I'd like to show you what I've been working on."

"Oh! Um. Yes, absolutely." Another heartbeat skipped. "I'll be right there."

“Thank you.” The captain closed the channel.

Dr. Hiraga couldn't believe what had just happened. A personal invitation? From the captain? It was like a dream come true. And from the sounds of it, all her questions were about to be answered.

But that wasn't truly what was getting her secret hopes up. Rather, it was the way Captain Vasser's voice had been filled with a kind of breathy, intimate urgency Dr. Hiraga had never heard before.

It had sounded, in a word, like flirting.

Dr. Hiraga couldn't quite bring herself to believe it. But it did put a little frisk in her step as she headed over to the nearest turbolift as quickly as she could.

As the turbolift carried her through the *Inyx* and toward the holodeck, Dr. Hiraga took a moment to inspect her reflection in one of the metal walls. She wanted to look good for the captain, even if it was nothing more than a friendly invitation. Unfortunately, the long duty shift had taken its toll. Dr. Hiraga was tired, and looked it. Her point of pride was her long, silky hair, which she always wore up in a fetching crown braid, but by now more than a few hairs were coming loose, and there was no time to do anything more than try to tuck them away out of sight. People said her big eyes, the color of chocolate, were pretty, but they said that about everyone. Dr. Hiraga wished she had time to run back to her quarters and put on a little makeup, but it wouldn't do to keep the captain waiting.

The sound of the turbolift door opening made the doctor jump, and she blushed even though nobody was there. That was a relief. It wouldn't do for the crew to see her preening like that. Dr. Hiraga hurried out of the lift and walked over to the holodeck.

She presented herself to the door, but it appeared to be locked.

After taking one last moment to adjust her glasses and muster her courage, she tapped her badge. "Captain? I'm here."

There was no reply, but the door slid open.

As Dr. Hiraga walked into the holodeck and crossed the threshold of the holographic projection playing within, she heard the door close and lock behind her. That was unusual, but Dr. Hiraga was immediately and completely distracted by the situation she found herself in.

It was a perfect recreation of the captain's quarters.

It had to be. It was clearly still the *Inyx*, and on a ship like that only the captain would have quarters as spacious as these. There was something disorienting about walking into a holodeck and finding yourself in just another part of the starship, but even more surprising than that was the mood.

The lights were dim and warm. There was some low, swinging music playing from hidden speakers. The bed was prominent, and its freshly-made sheets were scattered with rose petals.

There was no mistaking it. This was romantic.

Dr. Hiraga immediately started panicking.

"Welcome, doctor," said Captain Vasser. "Thank you for coming."

She was emerging from the bathroom, and the way she looked made Dr. Hiraga's jaw drop. Captain Vasser's hair was down, which Dr. Hiraga had never seen before. It made her look shockingly casual. She was out of her uniform too, which was another first. Even better, she was wearing a very long gown wrapped tight around her body, all the way up to her neck. Dr. Hiraga couldn't tell if she was

wearing anything underneath, and the garment looked tantalizingly easy to unravel.

Dr. Hiraga's cheeks started to burn. This was a fantasy come to life, but it made her feel as anxious as it did elated. This was *exactly* a fantasy come to life. A specific fantasy, one that Dr. Hiraga had played out in her mind's eye again and again. But that was impossible.

"C-captain," Dr. Hiraga replied awkwardly, struggling to keep calm. "Um...what can I do for you? Is it something medical?"

She couldn't assume anything, no matter how obvious it seemed. The last thing the doctor wanted was to make a fool of herself.

"Isn't it obvious?" Captain Vasser replied playfully. "Can't you guess?"

Dr. Hiraga's cheeks were burning. "I-I'm afraid not."

Captain Vasser laughed. "Let's not beat around the bush. You and I - we have a connection, don't we?"

The doctor's eyes went wide. She knew that line. She knew it because she'd programmed it herself. Months ago, in a moment of absolute shame and unbearable yearning, she'd started working on a holodeck scenario that would have allowed her to play out some of her fantasies with the captain. She'd never gone through with it, of course. It had felt far too disrespectful to Captain Vasser. But she'd never quite gotten around to deleting the half-completed files either.

But this Captain Vasser wasn't a hologram. The scenario wasn't functional. It had never been finished. This was real.

Dr. Hiraga struggled to find the words to respond as she fought to

wrap her mind around that. “W-well, um, yes, I mean, I’ve always felt we work well together, speaking as two professionals, and-“

“Oh, doctor.” Captain Vasser cut her off with a low chuckle. “I’m not talking about anything professional, I can assure you.”

Another line from her holodeck scenario. That had to mean something, but Dr. Hiraga was too flustered to figure out what.

“Then...” she ventured nervously, unable to keep the hope out of her voice.

Captain Vasser took a few slow, swaying steps toward her. “You know, doctor, I’ve always admired you.”

“I’ve always admired you too,” Dr. Hiraga replied hopelessly. “I mean you’re so... just... wow.”

“Thank you,” Captain Vasser purred. Hearing her purr like that was unbelievable. “And so are you. In fact, I just can’t hold myself back any longer.”

That was another line from her holodeck scenario, but Dr. Hiraga was so caught up in the fantasy, she barely noticed. “You can’t?”

Captain Vasser nodded, and moved closer. “You’re lovely, doctor.”

Dr. Hiraga couldn’t keep the dumb grin from her face. “I... oh my goodness, just hearing you say that is....”

Captain Vasser stepped closer still - close enough that she could reach up and stroke her fingertips along the doctor’s burning cheek. The warmth of her touch was further confirmation. This was real, even if it was still a virtual mirror of what Dr. Hiraga had half-

programmed into the holodeck.

“Do you feel the same way about me?” the captain asked.

“Yes!” Dr. Hiraga blurted out. “God yes. You’re... captain, you’re the most amazing woman I’ve ever known. And... I can’t believe how beautiful you look.”

“Thank you.” Captain Vasser grinned. She took hold of Dr. Hiraga’s arm and started to guide her, gently but commandingly, over to her bed. “Then, what are we waiting for?”

Dr. Hiraga let out a nervous giggle. Her head was spinning. “W-wait! Um... not that I don’t want to, but... isn’t this... a little fast?”

That was half of what she was thinking. The other half was all about her fantasies. The ones she had tentatively added into her holodeck scenario before chickening out. The secret, shameful fetishistic ones she’d never shared with anyone else. Dr. Hiraga couldn’t help but glance down at Captain Vasser’s body, hidden under her long gown. Was she wearing anything underneath? It was impossible to tell.

“Are you really going to tell me you don’t want this?” Captain Vasser replied, an undiminishable smile on her face. Despite her protest, Dr. Hiraga couldn’t help moving with her toward the bed.

“I do!” Dr. Hiraga insisted. “I do, I promise. M-more than anything. But... aren’t there rules about this? Fraternization, chain of command, acceptable power dynamics...”

“I’m the captain,” Captain Vasser said firmly. “The *Inyx* is my ship. I make the rules. I’ll take care of it all. Whatever it takes.”

Hearing that was like a drug. Whatever her reservations, Dr.

Hiraga couldn't help but lose herself to the moment. She didn't resist as Captain Vasser guided her to sit down on the edge of her bed.

The captain remained standing directly in front of her. It was a flustering reminder of their considerable height difference. Up close, Captain Vasser's body was even more stunning. She had aged gracefully into her thirties, and it was obvious that she kept herself in ferociously good shape.

Again, Dr. Hiraga's thoughts drifted to sinful places. Was the captain naked beneath her gown? That would have been a dream, and yet the doctor couldn't help but wish for something else instead.

"Doctor," Captain Vasser said. Her voice commanded the doctor's attention effortlessly, but it was different from the voice she used when she was giving orders from the bridge. It was secret. Intimate. "Do you want me?"

Dr. Hiraga knew that if she said 'yes', there would be no turning back. She wanted that more than anything in the world. And yet the old adage rang in her ears: if something seems too good to be true, it probably is. The captain wasn't acting normally. Perhaps she hadn't been for weeks. If something was truly wrong with her, as Dr. Hiraga had been suspecting, it wouldn't be right to take advantage.

"It's not that I don't want to," she replied regretfully. "I promise, with all my heart, that I do. But... I want to do this properly. Let's take it a little slower, OK?"

She braced herself for the worst. For anger. For rejection. What Dr. Hiraga wasn't ready for, though, was for Captain Vasser to simply reach down, untie the belt of her gown, and shrug it off from her shoulders.

Dr. Hiraga gasped when she saw what the captain had on

underneath.

From her neck all the way down to her ankles and her wrists, Captain Vasser was wearing a black bodysuit. It was perfectly skintight; it hugged her mature curves close and left absolutely nothing to the imagination. There was no mistaking its eroticism. Seeing anyone like that would have made Dr. Hiraga stare; seeing the captain, of all people, like that had her completely dumbstruck.

But it wasn't the form of the bodysuit that truly made the doctor's mouth water, and drove every last thought out of her head. It was the material. The bodysuit was made of black, shiny rubber, polished to such a mirror sheen that it reflected each one of the holodeck's dim lights in bright shapes that contoured perfectly to the curves of Captain Vasser's body. Dr. Hiraga had seen bodysuits like this before - in fantasy and pornography, if not reality - and she recognized it immediately.

It was latex.

Dr. Hiraga's love of latex was her deepest secret. Her greatest fetish. She'd never told anyone about it. Exploring kinks was difficult for someone in her profession - a starship doctor, working for the Alliance - and she had always struggled to imagine how to articulate her feelings. Compared to the kinds of fantasies that other people had, fetishizing a simple clothing material seemed strange. Abstract, almost.

But that didn't stop her craving for it from being all-consuming.

"Do you like it, doctor?" Captain Vasser asked, a strange smile on her face. "I can see that you do."

Dr. Hiraga nodded dumbly. She could scarcely believe this. Did the captain, her crush, of all people, secretly share her kink? That was too much. It was impossible. And yet...

Captain Vasser leaned closer. "Would you like to touch it?" she whispered.

Dr. Hiraga's nodding turned furious. She needed to, desperately.

Captain Vasser stretched out her arm, offering it to the breathless doctor.

Hand trembling, Dr. Hiraga reached out and touched the captain's latex-coated forearm. Immediately, she gasped. That first little touch was like a baptism. The rubber was impossibly, alluringly smooth, and the way it flexed, just slightly, under pressure, wrapping the light around her fingertip in a golden halo, was mesmerizing. Dr. Hiraga was in awe. It was even better than she'd always dreamed.

But the best part of all was that it was real. You couldn't do this with hardlight holograms. They couldn't quite get the texture just right. Dr. Hiraga knew. She'd tried, when she'd attempted to program something just like this into her secret, shameful little holodeck fantasy involving the captain.

And now, all of that was coming true.

"Oh my god," Dr. Hiraga breathed. "I can't believe... it's so..."

"Why stop there?" Captain Vasser's voice was breathy and low, her commanding tones made into a cougar's purr. "I'm all yours."

She stepped even closer, so close she was practically straddling Dr. Hiraga's lap. The captain reached down and took hold of the stunned doctor's wrists and guided them onto her body - one to her chest, perilously close to her breasts, the other around to cup her ass.

Dr. Hiraga didn't resist. She didn't protest. She was beyond that.

She wasn't thinking about medical propriety, or professionalism, or Alliance military regulations about fraternization. She was just thinking about her captain's body, and how it looked wrapped in this amazing, shiny rubber. Every touch was freshly intoxicating, and left her needing more.

Her fingers moved. She found herself touching, reaching, groping. She couldn't help it. The way the latex felt as it moved beneath her fingertips was ecstasy. Dr. Hiraga wanted nothing more than to keep going. To keep touching. To keep admiring Captain Vasser like this. To lose herself in the moment forever.

Worries about what was real and how this was possible were the furthest things from her mind. If this was a dream, she decided, she simply wanted to go on dreaming forever.

"Mmmff," Captain Vasser purred, as Dr. Hiraga explored her latex-clad body. "This feels amazing, doctor. You have no idea. I'm so glad I can share this with you."

"M-me... t-too..." Dr. Hiraga whimpered. Her whole body was on fire. She couldn't control herself. She was overwhelmed.

Captain Vasser stood over her, legs slightly apart, back arched as she presented herself obscenely for Dr. Hiraga's attention. The doctor couldn't look away. In the low, intimate light, even the slightest move Captain Vasser made as she breathed or adjusted her position made shimmers race across the surface of her bodysuit. It was the most beautiful thing Dr. Hiraga had ever seen. The woman she admired most, in the fetish gear that drove her crazy. She couldn't imagine a better model for her adored latex.

"Isn't it beautiful?" Captain Vasser murmured, as if to herself. "Sometimes I feel like I could stare at it for hours."

Dr. Hiraga nodded in agreement, spellbound.

"It does something wonderful to me," Captain Vasser confessed, in a low, soothing voice. "It's like my mind goes blank. Like I can't think. Like I don't want to think."

"Yeah..." Dr. Hiraga breathed. It was exactly like that.

"It's such a relief, for women like us," Captain Vasser mused. "We lead such stressful lives, don't we? We're both responsible for so many people, here on the *Inyx*. There are no days off for us. Not really. And that makes anything that can help us to switch off our minds even more blissful."

Dr. Hiraga nodded. She'd never quite thought about it like that, but now that her captain was saying it, it made perfect sense. This was blissful.

"Just look at it, in the light," Captain Vasser went on. "Look at the latex. Look at how it reflects the light when I move." She flexed her arm, demonstrating. "Every time, it's like a new pattern. A new work of art. Couldn't you just lose yourself to it?"

"Mhm," Dr. Hiraga murmured. Speaking seemed like it would take too much effort. The doctor was completely, singularly focused on the latex Captain Vasser was wearing.

"And the sensation," Captain Vasser went on, "that's even better, isn't it? Even more blissful. Even more relaxing. Keep touching, doctor. I want you to touch me."

Dr. Hiraga was obeying her without even thinking about it. She fell into a rhythm, moving her hands back and forth, up and down, along Captain Vasser's body.

"Yes, just like that," Captain Vasser said approvingly. Her approval felt like a warm glow. "Focus, doctor. Focus on how it feels under

your fingertips. So smooth. So sleek. Isn't there something incredibly relaxing about just touching it?"

"Y... yeah..." Dr. Hiraga sighed. There really was. Losing herself to the sensation was effortless.

"That's right." Captain Vasser nodded. "No need to think. No need to speak. Only touch. Only feel. Only relax."

Now that she was so completely focused, every part of Dr. Hiraga's body was starting to feel heavy and limp. It didn't bother her. It barely registered. She was totally relaxed.

"Let your breathing get nice and slow for me," Captain Vasser urged. Her voice was so soothing and so authoritative. Listening to her was effortless. "It'll help you to relax. You want that, don't you, doctor? To relax?"

Dr. Hiraga just nodded slowly.

"Then listen to me," Captain Vasser told her. "I'll guide you. Breathing slowly. Sinking. Relaxing. Allowing my latex to lull you into a nice, deep, relaxed state. You're already so close. I promise you, it's going to feel wondrous."

Dr. Hiraga felt a little like she was falling asleep. Her vision was starting to blur and telescope, and everything was starting to fade. Everything except for her captain's words. Those were as vivid as ever, and she couldn't help but obey.

"I think you're ready, doctor," Captain Vasser whispered. "I'm sure you know what a trance is. On my count of three, you're going to slip into a trance for me. Are you ready?"

Dr. Hiraga nodded again. She wasn't thinking.

“Three,” Captain Vasser counted. “Two. One. And... zero. Sink for me, doctor.”

As soon as she counted ‘zero’, the doctor went slack. She felt like a puppet whose strings had just been cut. She felt nothing.

Captain Vasser fell silent as she watched the hypnotized doctor. Then, a few moments later, across the holographic room, the air started to ripple. After a moment more, the ripple resolved itself into a figure: a hardlight hologram of a short woman in punk clothing, with dyed, vivid green, side-shaven hair and an unbelievably smug, shit-eating grin.

It was Wasp. The vandal-hacker the *Inyx* was supposed to be in pursuit of.

“Wow,” she remarked. “That was fucking hot.”

At her appearance, Captain Vasser started swaying not so differently from how the hypnotized Dr. Hiraga was swaying. Wasp noticed that at once.

“Hey, captain,” she said, grin impossibly wide. “At attention, babe.”

Captain Vasser immediately snapped to attention, her spine perfectly stiff and upright. All the emotion drained from her face, and she turned towards Wasp and offered the hacker a crisp, military salute.

Wasp laughed. “Fuck. I never get tired of making her do that.”

Something flickered in Dr. Hiraga’s eyes as she watched Wasp defile her beloved captain’s dignity. Deep down she was struggling to

rouse herself, but she had fallen so very far.

Wasp seemed to notice Dr. Hiraga's faint comprehension. She waltzed over to the doctor and struck a theatrical pose.

"Surprised?" she asked. "I'm sure you know who I am. Let me give you the cliff notes: I've been in your ship's systems for a while, and in your captain's head for just as long. I exploited all her naughty little fantasies about hypnosis and domination - exactly like she just did to you."

Dr. Hiraga whimpered and twitched. She still couldn't think or rouse her heavy limbs.

"She's a lot more shameless about them than you," Wasp commented. "Made whole libraries of her wet dreams right here on the holodeck. You couldn't bring yourself to finish one single scenario. Good taste, though! Latex? That's fun. And the captain? She really is a dish, isn't she? When she told me you were onto us, I just had to go for it."

Wasp licked her lips as she glanced thoughtfully between her victims.

"I hope getting to have a little fun with her was as good as you'd imagined," she added. "And, who knows? Maybe I'll let you two have some more fun together. I'm sure Vasser here will be nice and eager."

At that, Dr. Hiraga stirred. Something about Wasp's words offended her. Captain Vasser would never be eager. Not her. This was all Wasp, forcing her. Captain Vasser had always looked after her crew fiercely.

"Nnhgg..." she managed, her tongue drooling out of her mouth. "Nnnottt..."

“Awwww, wow!” Wasp simply giggled at her predicament. “So loyal! You really are down bad for her. I’d hoped so. Those old, buried, half-finished holodeck files of yours made it clear that you have such a high opinion of your captain.” She bent at the hips, putting her face menacingly close to the doctor’s. “But I’ve got bad news for you, doc: she really was very, very eager.”

Wasp waltzed around behind Captain Vasser, still frozen like a statue in her saluting pose. Under the guidance of Wasp’s hands, though, she spread her legs and did nothing to resist as Wasp carefully unzipped the front of her latex bodysuit between her thighs. And when Wasp’s hand plunged underneath the rubber and started molesting her, the captain shuddered with unmistakable pleasure.

Dr. Hiraga went completely still. The sight of the criminal they were hunting groping the captain she adored was ghoulish. But, despite herself, she was still mercilessly aroused. She couldn’t help it. She couldn’t stop admiring the latex.

Wasp gave herself a few long moments to enjoy the experience, before pulling away and holding up her hand for Dr. Hiraga to inspect.

Her fingertips were dripping wet. Captain Vasser was unbelievably turned on from what she’d just done to her ship’s doctor.

Dr. Hiraga let out a low, pitiful moan.

“I guess I’m the only one around here who knows what Captain Vasser is really like,” Wasp giggled. “See, she’s not just a girl with a wild side. She’s a real freak. It goes all the way to her bones. For her, the more twisted the better. I should know; I’ve perused all her favorites. And let me tell you: being hypnotized and forced to betray

someone who trusts her? That does it for our girl like *nothing* else.”

Dr. Hiraga wanted to deny it, but even if she'd been able to muster the words, they would have sounded hollow. Captain Vasser's wetness spoke for itself. So did the telltale blush of arousal in her cheeks.

The doctor was sure that, on some level, Captain Vasser hated what was happening. But on another, she clearly loved it.

“You're almost as much of a freak, though,” Wasp monologued to the helpless doctor. “Just a little more repressed. But like I said, good taste. Once I had her synthesize her new latex, I couldn't get over it. Fuck, who knew the straight-laced cap would look so good?”

She started groping Captain Vasser all over, her hands gripping and tugging and squeezing as she roamed over the captain's body. The way Wasp groped her was nothing like Dr. Hiraga's slow, careful, reverent touch. Glee glinted in the hacker's eyes as she mauled Captain Vasser's tits and slapped her ass, all while the hypnotized captain responded with nothing more than a blush and a faint whimper. The level of control Wasp wielded over her was terrifying, and it was clear she absolutely loved getting to show it off for an audience.

“Don't worry,” Wasp jeered, catching the faint look in Dr. Hiraga's blank eyes. “She's enjoying herself! Aren't you, babe?”

Captain Vasser didn't reply.

“Aw, c'mon.” Wasp feigned a pout and giggled. “Trust me, I can tell she's practically creaming herself. Hey, captain! Show the doc how much fun you're having. Smile for us. Nice and bright. That's an order.”

Dr. Hiraga failed to suppress a rush of arousal as she watched

Captain Vasser's entire face light up in a broad, bright grin. The expression was so obviously artificial as to be ghoulish, and the way it didn't reach her blank, entranced eyes made the captain look almost goofy. But nonetheless, especially with the way she was blushing, it gave her the look of someone caught in a moment of eager, stupid, mind-breaking pleasure.

Given what she was wearing, Dr. Hiraga couldn't help but find the spectacle incredibly, unbearably hot.

"Perfect!" Wasp drawled. She slipped her hand back into the unzipped portion of Captain Vasser's bodysuit and pushed two of her hardlight fingertips into the captain's cunt. "Hey, let's finish the look. Cap, throw up a double peace sign. I know you know what that is. That's an order."

Captain Vasser shuddered and moaned faintly as Wasp thrust inside her, but she nonetheless obeyed, lifting both of her hands up and forming a V-shape with her fingertips. Then, when Wasp added another finger, she gasped and her tongue lolled out of her mouth.

In that pose, with that expression on her face, wearing skin-tight latex, she no longer looked anything like the proud, dignified starship captain Dr. Hiraga had always known. Captain Vasser looked defiled. She looked pornographic. She looked like a twisted wet dream come to life.

And it was Dr. Hiraga's wet dream.

She didn't want to be, but she was unbelievably horny. She couldn't tell if her latex fetish was just that strong, or if the hypnosis was simply clouding her mind beyond all sense - or, worse, if some part of her actually liked seeing Captain Vasser this way. Whatever the reason, all she could do was hope Wasp didn't bother to check how wet she was under her uniform.

Wasp was clearly feeling none of the dread or guilt that haunted Dr. Hiraga. Her eyes were alight with a manic thrill as she played with the two older, military women like they were nothing more than dolls. Her wicked grin just kept widening and widening, and her whole body throbbed with enraptured arousal. There was no hint of remorse or restraint. As Dr. Hiraga fought, still, to rouse herself, a horrifying realization started to dawn on her.

Wasp was here, in the *Inyx's* systems. She had control over Captain Vasser - and now her, the ship's doctor. The kind of damage a person like her could do from this position was unthinkable.

"W-what..." Dr. Hiraga murmured. "What... are y-you going... to do... t-to us?"

Wasp looked at her and giggled - and then shrugged, which was somehow the worst part. "Doc, I have absolutely no idea! I'm not really a grand planner. More of an improvisational type. But now that you mention it..."

She reached out and stroked a fingertip along Dr. Hiraga's cheek. The doctor shivered, but she was still too deeply hypnotized to pull away.

"Just imagining all the things I can do with the *Inyx's* trusted doctor under my control," Wasp whispered, "gets me so - fucking - hot."

Dr. Hiraga shivered.

"I w-won't..." she tried to protest. "You c-can't... ma-"

"Oh, shhh." Wasp pressed a finger to the doctor's lips. That was all it took to topple her crumbling willpower. "Don't worry, babe. You won't have a choice. Captain Vasser? At ease. Let's finish this."

She stepped back. A little life and feeling returned to Captain Vasser's face and she dropped her hands, but she didn't quite stop grinning, and she seemed completely oblivious to the way she was dripping her own wetness down her thighs.

"Nice and relaxed, doctor," Captain Vasser murmured in that soothing voice of hers, as if nothing had happened. Dr. Hiraga couldn't tell if she even knew Wasp was there. "Keep looking at me. At my latex. Look at the way the light shimmers. Breathe nice and deep."

Dr. Hiraga couldn't help but listen, and within moments she was once again completely mesmerized. There was nothing she could do but let her eyes lose focus from staring at the gorgeous rubber, as her conscious mind and free will finally slipped into the darkness.

CHAPTER THREE

Chief Samira Carter was having a good day. It was her day off, and as chief of security on the *Inyx*, she didn't get many of those. Especially not now that they had chased Wasp, the criminal vandal-hacker, all the way to the furthest and most dangerous parts of the rim of Alliance space. This was the kind of time when standards slipped and tempers frayed, and it was Chief Carter's job to make sure that didn't happen. Captain Vasser was perfectly capable of running a tight ship, of course, but it wasn't appropriate to dirty the captain's hands with every petty squabble and misdeed amongst the crew.

Dealing with all that fell to Chief Carter. Nobody talked back to a good security officer, and she was a great security officer.

As she walked through the *Inyx*'s passageways and bulkheads, everyone who she passed looked at her with a healthy mixture of fear, respect, and admiration. On her days off, Chief Carter was particularly grateful to be able to bask in that last one. She put a hell of a lot of effort into her body, and she was always glad to get some appreciation for it. Tall and broad-shouldered, she certainly had the build of a security officer, and she spent just about every spare hour she could in the *Inyx*'s gymnasium keeping her large, prominent muscles nicely toned and finely honed.

When she was off-duty, like today, the regs even permitted her to wear a simple, black tank top instead of the usual button-up uniform jacket. She loved the looks it put on the faces of some of the younger

girls on the crew.

But today she had something more to bother with than winking at the women ogling her to make them blush. She had an appointment with the ship's chief medical officer.

"Hey, doctor," Chief Carter called out, as she walked into the medbay. "How's it going?"

"Chief." Dr. Hiraga rose to meet her, a warm, professional smile on her face. "Thank you for coming. I trust I haven't interrupted anything important? I was under the impression that you were off duty, but you look busy."

"Don't worry." Chief Carter laughed heartily. "I was just pumping some iron. I'm afraid I had to come straight from the gym."

She knew Dr. Hiraga was reacting to the sheen of sweat covering her muscular body. In truth, it was simply how Chief Carter often liked to present herself. It usually had the desired effect. Her rich, olive skin looked incredible that way, she'd often been told. She could have showered, but instead she'd just taken a little time to make sure her chin-length bob of black hair looked good.

Dr. Hiraga wasn't her usual type. But you never knew.

"I'll be sure not to keep you," Dr. Hiraga replied. "As you know, it's mostly just a check-up."

"I'm sure it'll be quick," Chief Carter quipped as the two of them went to sit down. "As you can see, I'm in great shape."

Dr. Hiraga laughed politely. "I'm sure. But today we're more interested in your mental health than your physical health."

“Pfft. I don’t really go in for that kind of stuff, but alright.” Chief Carter sat back, one arm resting over the back of her chair. “What do you need to ask?”

The doctor pulled something up on her datapad. “Well, it’s been a long tour, and we haven’t seen much success so far. How are you handling the stress?”

Chief Carter shrugged easily. “It’s nothing. I’m used to it.”

“Are you sure?” Dr. Hiraga pressed. “As chief of security, there’s a lot of pressure on your shoulders.”

“My shoulders can handle it.” Chief Carter flexed a little, grinning. “If I get frustrated, all I need to do is picture what I’m gonna do to that Wasp once we get our hands on her.”

“That’s certainly what I like to hear.” Something lively and daring suddenly flashed through Dr. Hiraga’s eyes and - to Chief Carter’s shock - she bit her bottom lip. “Don’t worry, Chief. I trust you. I’m looking at those shoulders of yours very, very carefully.”

She was plainly flirting and, for once, Chief Carter was too stunned to flirt back. This was the last thing she’d expected from the ship’s mousy doctor.

“Right.” She laughed awkwardly, immediately unsure if she’d simply imagined it.

“Do you feel you have coping methods for the stresses that your role presents?” Dr. Hiraga asked, flipping back to professionalism. “Friends? Hobbies? Ways to blow off steam?”

“Well, sure. That’s what I go to the gymnasium for.” Chief Carter gestured at her biceps. “There’s no better way to deal with things

than lifting something nice and heavy. It gives you a goal to strive for. Gets you out of your own head. It feels great, even if it does leave you a little sweaty.”

“So I see.” Dr. Hiraga’s eyes flashed again. “You make it sound very appealing, Chief. Perhaps I’ll have to pay you a visit at the gym sometime - if you wouldn’t mind, of course.”

Her flirtatious tone threw the security chief off-balance again. “You mean, to work out? Sure. I’d be more than happy to show you the ropes, spot for you, stuff like that.”

“Oh, no.” Dr. Hiraga giggled uncharacteristically. “I was just thinking that I’d love to watch.”

Chief Carter blinked and then looked at her sharply. There was no way she had imagined that. Dr. Hiraga was certainly in some kind of mood. Besides her flirtiness, she was calmer and more assured than Chief Carter had ever seen before. And... was she wearing something underneath her uniform? Chief Carter could see, just barely, a few hints of something black and shiny. It looked kinky.

A slow smile crept over Chief Carter’s face. Was Dr. Hiraga having some kind of midlife crisis? Whatever was happening, it was clearly good for her. The doctor had always been so high-strung, and if discovering her wild side was helping her to get over that, Chief Carter was happy for her.

Plus, she’d be happy to help. Fraternizations between officers were strictly regulated, of course, but as chief of security, Chief Carter felt entitled to bend the rules a little, provided she was being discreet. Dr. Hiraga had never really caught her eye before, but she certainly wasn’t bad-looking, and Chief Carter found herself suddenly curious about what, exactly, was going on under that uniform.

“Sure,” Chief Carter replied slowly, grinning. “You can come watch. I bet there are all kinds of things I could show you.”

“I bet.” Dr. Hiraga took a moment to smile daringly at her before moving on. “Well, I think it’s safe to say that you’re doing great. Now let’s take care of the procedure.”

Chief Carter suddenly frowned. “The procedure?” She’d heard nothing about this.

“An inoculation,” Dr. Hiraga explained. “We’re entering a region of space inhabited by a unique void-faring alien species called the Kressari. They make use of a unique song with mind-altering effects. I’ve devised a simple procedure to protect each of us from those effects.”

“I see,” Chief Carter replied cautiously. This was all news to her. “What does it involve?”

“A simple holo-stimulant nano-implant, based on our ship’s very own holodeck technology.” Dr. Hiraga stood up and started making a few preparations. “It’s injected via the aural canal and attaches to the optic nerve. From there, it makes use of holographic projections that can cancel out other mind-altering effects.”

“Huh.” Chief Carter was taken aback. She trusted Dr. Hiraga, obviously, but she’d never heard of the Kressari before, and this was the kind of thing she’d expect to find out about in a briefing or a ship-wide announcement. “And... this is all coming from Captain Vasser, right?”

“Why, of course.” Dr. Hiraga turned back to her and handed her datapad to the security chief. “Here.”

Chief Carter looked. Sure enough, it was right there - an order to

inoculate the crew just as Dr. Hiraga had described, signed by the captain herself. That was more than enough to set Chief Carter at ease.

“What do you need me to do?” Chief Carter asked, shrugging.

“Over here, please.”

Dr. Hiraga beckoned Chief Carter over from her desk to one of the large, reclining examination chairs that occupied the medbay, surrounded by various pieces of medical equipment. Chief Carter obligingly hopped up into the chair and lay down, resting her head on the comfortable headrest. Dr. Hiraga bustled next to her, preparing for the procedure.

“Your hand, please,” the doctor said.

Chief Carter offered it to her immediately, but froze when she saw what the doctor was holding. “Um... what is that for?”

The doctor had reached under the chair and retrieved a large, sturdy-looking leather cuff, attached to the examination chair by a length of cable.

“I’m afraid restraints are standard procedure for this kind of thing,” Dr. Hiraga replied calmly. “Just in case. A few brief muscle spasms aren’t out of the question. We wouldn’t want you to hurt yourself.”

“Uh-huh,” Chief Carter said nervously.

This day was getting stranger and stranger but she had no reason to question the ship’s doctor, especially when she was acting on the captain’s orders. Still, Chief Carter found herself beginning to sweat and squirm as Dr. Hiraga moved carefully around the bed attaching

the restraints - one for each wrist and each ankle.

“Y-you know, these might not actually help all that much.” Chief Carter made a show of tensing her muscles, and did her best to keep her voice light and jovial. “I’m sure they’re good enough for most of your patients, but I bet I could bust out in a heartbeat if I really tried.”

Dr. Hiraga had moved away to inspect her datapad, but she glanced back with a look of intense amusement on her face. “Oh, I don’t know about that.”

Something about her complete and total assurance sent a shiver down Chief Carter’s spine. “Yeah?”

“These are designed to hold anyone, chief,” Dr. Hiraga said. “And I do mean anyone. But, if you like, feel free to try them.”

Chief Carter blinked. “Huh.”

“Try it,” Dr. Hiraga repeated. “Try and break out. Give it your best shot.”

That light in her eyes was back, and there was something unreadable in the amusement on her face. This wasn’t the uptight, professional doctor Chief Carter was used to. “No, uh, I was just kidding around,” Chief Carter replied bashfully. “I wouldn’t want to break anything.”

“Not much chance of that, I promise you.” An unusual smirk came to the doctor’s face. “Besides, you’ve got me curious. Go ahead.”

“N-no.” Now, Chief Carter was really struggling to keep her voice light. “I mean, I-“

“What’s the matter?” Dr. Hiraga dared insistently. The flirtiness in her voice was back too. “The big, strong chief of security doesn’t want to put on a show? That doesn’t sound like you! You’re not scared, are you?”

Chief Carter couldn’t ignore that. It was a regular refrain between her gym buddies back on Earth, and she never backed down from a challenge. “Of course not!” she shot back, her cheeks slightly red. “Just don’t go blaming me if I break your chair. I warned you.”

Dr. Hiraga simply nodded and stood back to watch, a lurid, curious expression on her face. Chief Carter knew she couldn’t back down now. She sat up as much as she was able, braced herself against the chair with her left arm, and then started to bend her right, engaging her powerful biceps as much as she could to try and fight against the restraints.

Nothing.

Chief Carter had been hoping to at least feel them budge. They didn’t. There was no give. No elasticity. The restraints were merciless. She strained as hard as she could, uncomfortably conscious of the doctor’s gaze, but all she managed to do was exhaust herself. The longer she tried without success, the more a nameless, shameful tingling started to build within her body.

After a few more long moments, there was nothing for her to do but admit defeat.

When she slumped back into the examination chair, Chief Carter heard Dr. Hiraga laugh at her failure. That made her cheeks burn much, much hotter.

“You see?” Dr. Hiraga teased. “Now, allow me to just...”

She tapped a few times on the control panel next to the chair.

There was a hum of energy coming from underneath Chief Carter, and then the cables connected to the cuffs around her wrists and ankles suddenly pulled tight, yanking the security chief's thick, muscular limbs flat against the chair and binding her firmly in place. Chief Carter let out a surprised yelp.

"Doc! You could have warned me."

"It's all for your own safety," Dr. Hiraga assured her. "Besides, does it really matter? You're no more helpless now than you were before."

Helpless. That word ran straight through Chief Carter's body like a shock. "I'm not—"

"You know, it was very cute watching you strain just now." Dr. Hiraga's voice was edging beyond teasing, into mockery. "Huffing and puffing, straining and flexing. You looked so surprised! Not used to feeling overpowered, are you?"

A strangled noise erupted from Chief Carter's throat. Words slipped away from her, as her body burned hotter and hotter.

"It was quite the sight," Dr. Hiraga continued, walking around the bed so she could stand next to the chief's head. "Just imagine if the rest of the crew saw you like this. Especially all those recruits you end up drilling. They're so scared of you! I bet they wouldn't be if they saw the big, strong, muscley Chief Carter looking as weak as a kitten."

Chief Carter had to choke on her breath not to moan.

"Don't worry. It won't be for long. Although it could be, couldn't it?" Dr. Hiraga reached out and stroked a finger along Chief Carter's cheek. She was obviously enjoying that the chief couldn't stop her. "I could keep you tied down here for a nice, long time if I really

wanted to. It's not like you could do anything to stop me, could you?"

"D-d-doctor!" Chief Carter spluttered. "T-this isn't funny."

"Come to think of it, let me just make sure we aren't disturbed." Dr. Hiraga tapped the console again, and Chief Carter heard the disconcerting clunk of the medbay's doors locking shut. "You're right, it's not funny," she said, turning back. "I'm not joking. I'm enjoying myself in a very different way."

Chief Carter's blood started to run cold. This wasn't right. Dr. Hiraga didn't behave this way. This was more than just a weird day. Something had happened - was happening - to the doctor. Something serious.

"D-Doctor Hiraga." Chief Carter tried to make her voice firm instead of breathless. "Let me go. Right now."

"No," Dr. Hiraga replied at once. Hearing her say it like that, point-blank, confirmed Chief Carter's worst fears. "You haven't taken your medicine yet, Chief Carter. I need to make sure you take your medicine. She told me to."

"She? The captain?"

"No," Dr. Hiraga said again. "*Her*." She glanced up, momentarily addressing the room. "Computer. Activate the emergency medical hologram."

Hidden projectors concealed all around the medbay whirled into life and, within just a few moments, an image made of hardlight materialized on the opposite side of the examination chair from Dr. Hiraga. Chief Carter recognized who it was at once, and it made her heart start pounding a double rhythm.

It was Wasp.

Chief Carter would have recognized the amoral hacker anywhere. She'd certainly spent enough time staring at her file. Those punk tattoos and that slicked streak of neon green hair were unmistakable. She'd never seen an image of Wasp looking quite like this, though. The hacker's hologram was wearing an old-fashioned white-and-red nurse's outfit that was made entirely out of shiny rubber and that was unapologetically porny in its tightness and skimpiness. Chief Carter hoped against hope that it was nothing more than a hologram, but her hopes were dashed when Wasp came to life with a malicious, impish grin.

"What's the matter, doc?" Wasp drawled. "Have we got a rowdy patient on our hands?" She glanced down at Chief Carter, and then wolf-whistled theatrically. "Wow! They weren't kidding. She's a real beefcake."

"What the—" Chief Carter immediately redoubled her efforts to break free of the restraints, but that served only as a stomach-churning reminder of how helpless she was. Now that the restraints had been pulled tight, her efforts were even more futile. "Release me! Right now!"

"Nope!" Wasp replied breezily. "She just told you. You gotta take your medicine."

"She..." Chief Carter turned toward the doctor. "Doctor Hiraga! How could you do this? Is she forcing you? Paying you? Blackmailing you? Or are you truly just—"

Her accusations died on her lips when, for the first time, she truly looked deep into Dr. Hiraga's eyes. Earlier, she had only seen the dancing light of enjoyment and flirtation. Now she could look beyond that, and see it for what it was: nothing but a reflection caught in the glassy eyes of a doll. In truth, Dr. Hiraga's eyes were

blank. They were a yawning void, indicating nothing but a total lack of will or awareness.

All her gleeful teasing from before was gone too. Chief Carter instinctively realized that Dr. Hiraga wasn't in control of herself. Earlier, she had been nothing but a puppet playing out her assigned part. Now that it was over, she was as limp as a discarded marionette.

And Wasp, of course, was the puppeteer.

"What have you done to her?" Chief Carter demanded.

"Just a little holodeck hypnotism," Wasp answered lightly. "Don't worry. You'll get your taste soon enough."

Chief Carter didn't like the sound of that one bit. "And... you faked the captain's seal?" she asked hopefully, even though she was already dreading the answer.

"No need." Wasp giggled wickedly. "Vasser was the first. But not the last. Oh no."

Chief Carter's head was starting to spin. If Wasp already had Captain Vasser wrapped around her little finger, the whole ship was in danger. That made escaping even more urgent. She was the chief of security. It was her job to keep everyone safe, and that meant she needed to figure out how to get free.

"What are you going to do to me?" she demanded, as much as anything to try and keep Wasp talking.

"Why, me? Can't you tell? I'm the emergency medical hologram!" Wasp twirled, almost flipping up her latex miniskirt. "The outfit is more than just fanservice for the doctor here. It's just like she said. We're going to give you a little procedure."

That truly made Chief Carter's blood run cold. "What kind of procedure?"

"She already told you, meathead," Wasp mocked. "Well, not the stuff about it being an inoculation against aliens. That was bullshit. But yeah, we're going to give you a fun little implant. Something to make you nice and docile for me."

"That'll never work!" Chief Carter raged at once. "I'll never obey you!"

"That's the spirit." Wasp winked at her, before turning to Dr. Hiraga. "How are we looking, doc?"

"The implant is ready," Dr. Hiraga replied. The lack of emotion in her voice was shocking. "However, my scanners indicate agitated theta rhythm activity from Chief Carter. It may interfere."

"Hm." Wasp stroked her chin thoughtfully. "Too much resistance, huh? Any suggestions?"

"A sedative is a possibility," Dr. Hiraga said blankly. "But it would be necessary to fine-tune the dose. Too much or too little would render indoctrination ineffective."

"I see," Wasp mused, before a fresh grin came to her face. "We can worry about that later. For now, I have a different idea about how to deal with all that pesky resistance."

"Good luck," Chief Carter snorted. A faint hope had started to grow within her. All she had to do was hold out. Sooner or later, someone would come to find her. "You'll need it. I'll never break. Never. I'm as strong as steel."

The devilish, lopsided grin that split Wasp's face from ear to ear as she loomed over the captive security chief immediately wiped away Carter's confidence.

"That's the fun part, chief," Wasp drawled. "You're really, really not."

"What are you talking about?" Chief Carter frowned nervously.

"You know, I've hacked all the way through your ship's holographic systems and data," Wasp crowed. "And wow, turns out everyone around here is hiding their dirty, kinky laundry in their holodeck scenarios! I guess that's what comes of all this repressed, stuffed-shirt military shit. Anyway, I really, really liked what I found in yours."

"N-no," Chief Carter breathed, disbelieving, mortified.

"Oh yes," Wasp cackled gleefully. "It's perfect. Almost cliché, really, but let no one say I'm not a fan of the classics." She leaned in, putting her face very close to Chief Carter's. "No wonder you were getting all hot and bothered when Doctor Hiraga was strapping you down."

"S-shut up!"

Chief Carter had turned bright scarlet. She had never felt so humiliated. She longed to get up, to strike Wasp, to walk away - anything. But she couldn't, and the certain knowledge of her own powerlessness itched at her, stimulating urges she longed to suppress.

"Honestly, you should be thanking me," Wasp pronounced. "Just think of this as one of your naughty little fantasies come to life. Lie back and enjoy it. Enjoy feeling totally, pathetically weak and helpless."

Those words were such a shock they made Chief Carter stop squirming. There was no denying it now. Wasp knew. Chief Carter couldn't help running through her personal holodeck scenarios in the process - the naughty ones, the ones she kept secret. Among them were fantasies of being tied up and restrained. Fantasies of being overpowered. Fantasies of being drugged. The one thing they all had in common was defeat, and a specific angle of degradation.

Nothing got Chief Carter off harder than the thought of someone making the muscles and strength she was so proud of weak and useless, and then bullying her for it.

The way Dr. Hiraga was teasing her earlier had already hit uncomfortably close to home. The taunting smirk on her face as she'd watched the chief try and fail to break her bonds was something lifted straight from Chief Carter's wet dreams. Now she understood why.

She prided herself on her strength. Her athleticism. Her impeccable physical condition. Someone watching it all fail her was a hot lash of humiliation that stirred up her body. It turned her stomach into a binding knot of craving and desperate, unbearable shame, and left her feeling like the ground had opened up beneath her, sending her tumbling, falling.

It was every bit as thrilling as it was horrifying, and a little voice at the back of Chief Carter's mind always begged for more.

She whimpered. She couldn't help it.

"Aw, look at that!" Wasp mocked. "The big strong bear has already turned into a meek little kitten. And I've barely had any fun yet."

"S-shut up!" Chief Carter wished she had a wittier or more biting retort, but she didn't. She couldn't think. She couldn't fucking think.

“Make me,” Wasp dared immediately. “Shut me up. C’mon. Oh, wait, you can’t. You’re trapped. You’re weak. Wanna take another run at those restraints?”

“I-I’m not,” Chief Carter insisted, and cringed when her voice came out as a whimper.

She couldn’t bring herself to try to break free again. She already knew what would happen, and how it would make her feel.

“Didn’t think so.” Wasp’s leering, victorious grin was another hot, humiliating lash. “Weak.”

Chief Carter started squirming again. She wasn’t even strong enough to keep herself from doing that.

“You can’t stop me doing anything I want,” Wasp pressed. “See?”

She reached out toward Chief Carter and stroked her fingertips over the lines of one of the muscular woman’s biceps. Her holographic form was made of hardlight, not flesh, but it was a close enough imitation to make Chief Carter twitch at the intimate touch. Wasp simply laughed at her plight.

“G-get off me!” Chief Carter protested weakly.

“Make me,” Wasp dared again. “Or else I’m going to go a lot further than just that. Like...”

The hacker bent over the examination chair, and it took Chief Carter far too long to realize that Wasp was about to kiss her. She tried to writhe out of the way but she could only move so much, and Wasp’s hands were immediately there to hold her head firm. The sensation of being overpowered by the person she was supposed to

be apprehending sent an immediate quiver of shameful pleasure down Chief Carter's spine.

Then Wasp kissed her.

There was nothing gentle or affectionate about the kiss. It was a pure power play. Wasp was making a show of the power she had over the restrained chief by claiming her lips and invading her mouth. Chief Carter couldn't stop her, and couldn't fight back.

So instead, she melted.

When Wasp finally pulled away, Chief Carter was left panting, her lips wet with drool, her cheeks stained with a girlish blush that didn't suit her powerful body. The chief could see herself reflected in Wasp's gleeful, malicious eyes, and what she saw there made her clench her thighs together in instinctive desperation.

"You see?" Wasp jeered. "You can't stop me. You. Can't. Stop. Me."

"I-I..." The way the hacker drove the point home made it inescapable. Her words thundered through Chief Carter's head, and the knot in her stomach kept binding tighter.

"But that's just first base," Wasp added, licking her lips. "And I've always been a greedy girl. The look on your face is already delicious, but I want way, way more. Let's see..."

Wasp reached down Chief Carter's body, and the chief saw white when she felt Wasp touch the belt buckle of her uniform pants.

"N-n-no!" she whined, as Wasp unfastened the buckle and unzipped her pants, pulling them down just a little to hang on her wide hips. "P... p..."

“Please?” Wasp threw back her head and laughed louder than ever. “Is that a ‘please’ I hear catching in your throat? Oh my god. I bet that stings, huh?”

“Hng... hrnngg.” Chief Carter was burning white hot. She wanted to escape from the heat of her own shame, but there was nowhere to go. She couldn’t even hide her face.

“Maybe ‘stings’ isn’t the right word,” Wasp said smugly. “But still. Big, bad Chief Samira Carter. I bet all the girls on the ship love you, huh? I wonder what they’d say if they saw you now. Tied up. Weak. Begging. Dripping wet.”

“Hfff.” Chief Carter tried to keep it out, but that suggestion wormed its way into her head. She found herself thinking about the women who had been ogling her earlier. The shame was ecstatic. “I-I’m... nnn...” she tried to say, fighting for her last shred of dignity. “Nnnot... wet...”

“Yeah? Let’s see, shall we?”

Wasp started peeling Chief Carter’s boxer shorts away from her body. The chief felt them come away sticky and wet. Wasp’s mocking laughter made her thrash her head from side to side.

“Remember what you were saying earlier?” she jeered. “Something about all the things you wanted to do to me when you caught me? How’s that looking now, chief?”

Chief Carter couldn’t answer. Her tongue hung limply out of her mouth. The sensation of falling was overwhelming.

“Maybe this’ll get you making some noise,” Wasp giggled, and pushed three of her fingers into the chief’s cunt.

Chief Carter let out one long, loud moan, girly and thick with pleasure. As soon as she heard the sound coming out of her own mouth, she tensed every single muscle in her body in an effort to stifle herself. It worked, but only just, and the way it made her back arch and her body writhe was just as humiliating as moaning.

When Wasp started pumping her fingers in and out in a rough, insistent rhythm, she lost control again. Wasp's merciless bullying had put the muscular chief on a hair trigger, and the hacker seemed to know exactly how to touch her. Within moments, Chief Carter's choked moans were forcing their way out of her throat and filling the medbay. The only thing louder was Wasp's laughter, ringing inescapably in Chief Carter's ears.

"Oh my god!" Wasp cried gleefully as she fucked her with her fingers. "Look at you now. I bet you couldn't even pick yourself up out of that chair. I can't believe this is all it takes. You're so much easier than I thought you'd be, kitten."

Her words made the boiling knot of humiliation and tension in Chief Carter's stomach bind even tighter, and made her cunt clench down pitifully on Wasp's fingers. The truth of her insults was what made Chief Carter truly burn. Her body felt like jelly. Even without the restraints, she wouldn't be able to stand. Pleasure was robbing her of all her strength, and it was rapidly building to a mortifying peak.

"Gonna come for me already?" Wasp was increasing her pace, her thumb brushing against Chief Carter's throbbing clit. "I didn't know you were this much of a quickshot, too. It's pathetic."

"N-n-noooo," Chief Carter howled in futile defiance.

"Oh yeah? Let's see."

Wasp did the cruelest thing possible: she started to pull back,

making her strokes shallower and keeping her fingertips from reaching the most sensitive places inside Chief Carter's body. And shamefully, the chief couldn't find the strength to stop herself from thrusting forward with her hips as much as her restraints would allow, desperate for more stimulation.

She didn't want this, but her body needed it. Chief Carter was so unbelievably weak to Wasp's torture.

Wasp howled with laughter as she played Chief Carter like a musical instrument. Her wide, manic eyes were fixated on her victim's face as she drew strength and glee from the increasingly humiliated, needy, pleasure-drunk expressions that Chief Carter wore.

"Look at you," Wasp mocked. "You can't even stop yourself from enjoying it."

Shamefully, Chief Carter couldn't help but feel an instinctive, animal gratitude when Wasp started finger-fucking her in earnest again, bringing the wave of her orgasm to its crest. She screamed like a trapped beast as she came, absolute humiliation burning through her mind as she soiled Wasp's fingers with her wetness.

Wasp took a moment to bask in her victory, but soon turned serious. "Doc," she called out to one side. "The implant, if you please."

Dr. Hiraga, who had been standing at attention on the other side of the examination chair, picked up a hypospray from a nearby tray and handed it across to Wasp. Still in the throes of orgasm, Chief Carter only caught a quick look. She saw something pointed and threatening attached to one end.

"Hold her," Wasp commanded.

The brainwashed doctor moved to hold Chief Carter's head still. Chief Carter was starting to come down from her humiliating, orgasmic high and regain a little sense, but she still wasn't able to fight Dr. Hiraga off. The doctor was slight and far from athletic, but Chief Carter felt as weak as a kitten. Her proud muscles wouldn't obey her, and so she was helpless as Wasp held the hypospray to her ear.

"Time to take your medicine," Wasp drawled, before pulling the trigger.

Accompanied by the sound of decompressing air, the procedure felt like an icicle being driven deep into Chief Carter's ear - deeper than was physically possible, so deep it felt like it was reaching her brain. She squirmed uselessly as she felt her mind curdle, the intrusive sensation of the nano-liquid driving all thoughts out of her head. Then, as the implant attached to her optic nerve, strange, glitch-like artifacts started to flake across her vision.

Chief Carter felt utterly helpless. Wasp was inside her now. She could sense something moving within her, changing her, a spider spreading its web throughout her brain. She wasn't sure if it was a phantom sensation or not.

"How are we looking, doc?" Wasp asked, after a moment.

Dr. Hiraga checked her datapad. "Implant is active and ready for use."

"Perfect!" Wasp drew herself up authoritatively in an impression of Captain Vasser made all the more mocking by her slutty nurse's outfit. "Now, on my mark."

She snapped her fingers.

Dr. Hiraga tapped on her datapad and at once, the holo-stimulant

implant behind Chief Carter's eyes came to life, blaring colors that were impossibly vivid and blindingly bright. Captain Vasser shuddered and seized up as the holographic lights overstimulated her nerves and saturated all of her senses. She couldn't just see the lights, she could hear them. Taste them. Feel them.

A spiral.

It was a spiral, spinning; a dizzying kaleidoscope that drowned her as it turned. The implant blared so bright it shone all the way through her eyes, turning her eyeballs themselves into spinning, spiral orbs that glowed with electric intensity, bathing the space in front of Chief Carter with an unnatural light she could not herself see.

She couldn't see the room, only the spiral, as it sunk deep into her psyche and imprinted upon her.

Eventually, mercifully, it stopped. Chief Carter slumped completely limp. No workout had ever left her feeling more wrung out. Her head was throbbing like it was about to split open, and she could still see that shining spiral whenever she blinked. She felt ruined.

"Talk to me, doc," Wasp commanded. She was watching Chief Carter intently.

"All the readouts are good," Dr. Hiraga reported in a flat monotone. "Preliminary test complete. Basic hypno-conditioning has been implanted successfully, along with the triggers you specified."

"Perfect." Wasp's voice turned breathy and eager. "Fuck, that was hot. I bet the cap would be creaming her panties if she'd seen that. Too bad she's stuck on the bridge. Oh well! Let's get her free. The restraints are getting old."

Dr. Hiraga obediently tapped on the nearby control panel, and the cuffs around Chief Carter's wrists and ankles all simultaneously came loose.

Chief Carter couldn't believe her luck. Finally, Wasp had made a mistake.

She felt like shit, but she wasn't brainwashed like Dr. Hiraga. Not yet. She was still her own woman. And now she was free. Hidden reserves of strength surged within her. If nothing else, it would be enough to deal with Wasp, subdue Dr. Hiraga, and alert the rest of the *Inyx's* crew.

Chief Carter took one single deep breath before she leaped to her feet and threw herself at Wasp.

It was instinct more than anything. You couldn't knock out a hardlight hologram, but you could sure as hell shove one aside for a moment. And a moment was all she would need. She raised her fist, ready to strike, but was greeted with nothing but Wasp's supremely confident smirk.

"*Melt*, kitten," the hacker said.

As soon as that first word washed over Chief Carter, she was undone. The post-hypnotic trigger took hold of her in an instant. Her muscles failed her. Her raised fist slumped back to her side, and she collapsed to her knees as her legs turned to jelly.

Finally, it clicked. It didn't matter how strong Chief Carter was. Wasp was in control.

As she knelt before the hacker, Chief Carter felt like the weakest, most helpless woman in the galaxy. And it made her cunt start to drip again.

“That’s what I like to see,” Wasp cooed, as she looked into Chief Carter’s eyes. “Defeat. See? Medicine doesn’t always go down easy. But it’s good for you, chief. It really is.”

Chief Carter didn’t say anything. She was done. Her mind was still her own, for now, but her body was Wasp’s. She’d lost. There was no point in fighting. It was over.

“Here,” Wasp said. “Something to take care of the aftertaste.”

She lifted her white latex miniskirt and, with a wave of her hand, conjured up a huge hardlight cock, mounted to her body with straps and a harness. Wasp reached down and guided Chief Carter’s head to it, pushing the tip of the holographic strap-on past her lips.

Chief Carter started to suck. Even if she’d had the strength to fight, she no longer had the will.

“I think we can call the test a complete success,” Wasp purred, admiring the broken, muscular woman kneeling before her and sucking her strap-on. “Let’s take her the rest of the way.”

She snapped her fingers, and Dr. Hiraga reactivated the holo-stimulant implant.

Lights blared back into life, outshining Chief Carter’s pupils and irises with spinning spiral eyes and drowning both pleasure and humiliation with blissful, hypnotic oblivion.

CHAPTER FOUR

Peggy Morgan, the *Inyx*'s science officer, made sure to offer a proper salute to Captain Vasser as she finished up her duty shift on the bridge and headed into the turbolift that would take her back down to her quarters, in the bowels of the ship. As soon as the doors slid closed with their distinctive *hiss*, though, she slumped against the wall.

Another awful day.

It just wasn't getting any easier. Peggy had always hoped that, somehow, once she made it to a senior enough post, she'd be able to fit in. No such luck. Instead, it felt like other members of the crew were constantly laughing at her behind her back, be it because of the way she looked, or the way she talked, or her tendency to get lost in daydreaming and fantasy when during an uneventful shift.

Yes, Peggy was a huge nerd. She understood perfectly well that she was a complete stereotype of a science officer. Peggy was pale and freckled, with long, red hair and huge, round glasses. She couldn't handle contact lenses or laser correction, and a nervous habit meant that she often stuttered or lisped when she spoke. Thanks to that she usually kept quiet - but when she found her voice, she sometimes got carried away with her scientific explanations.

It wasn't her fault that the finer points of subquantum physics were so fascinating! Really, other Alliance officers should try to

educate themselves. Instead, when Captain Vasser cut her off, they just giggled behind their hands. And why did the captain have to be so short with her anyway? She was an officer! A young one, yes, but she still deserved respect.

Peggy sighed. Hopefully, once they were through with this mission, she could get herself transferred to a ship that suited her better. Until then, there was no use dwelling on it. All she could do was go back to her quarters after every shift and try to take her mind off it all by indulging in her favorite hobby.

Anime.

Yes, being obsessed with twenty-first-century media was often considered cringe. No, it didn't help with her image as a complete and total dork. But Peggy didn't care. Anime was her life. There was nothing better than curling up in her bunk with her body pillow and waifu plushes to burn through a few seasons of classic animation.

It was such a shame that Peggy didn't have anyone to share her passion with. Unfortunately, to most people, anime was just some boring, old-fashioned, dead medium, no different from opera and ballet. Apparently, your average Alliance starship officer didn't have much interest in classical culture. Oh, Peggy had tried to spread the good word. But just like everything else, it had mostly gotten her ignored and quietly made fun of.

Fine. Whatever. All Peggy needed to do to escape their scorn was make it back to her quarters without running into anyone unpleasant. Then she'd have the evening all to herself.

But it was never that easy. Peggy cursed her luck when she rounded a bulkhead and found herself staring at the *Inyx's* chief of security, Samira Carter.

Great.

Chief Carter was one of the worst. Peggy had spent her entire education looking forward to the day she no longer had to deal with abrasive, small-minded, meat-headed jocks. But as it turned out, they had a way of following you wherever you went. Peggy and Chief Carter were never going to be friends. Chief Carter had that loud, swaggering confidence that just grated uncomfortably on Peggy's nerves. She treated the whole ship, and everything in it like it was her own personal playground - especially the women. It was infuriating that, just because she had a few muscles, she assumed she could have any girl she wanted. It was even more infuriating that she seemed to be right.

Peggy would have disliked Carter even if she'd left the science officer completely alone. She was everything Peggy had learned to resent and avoid. But in typical fashion, she was also the ringleader of all the mockery Peggy had received. She had been the first to make cutting comments about Peggy's love of anime, and she was always the one who laughed the loudest whenever she tripped over her words or got shut down by Captain Vasser. And since she was such a big presence wherever she went, the rest of the crew had ended up taking their cues from her.

Peggy had tried to give Chief Carter the benefit of the doubt. It wasn't like the security chief was singling her out in particular. She treated almost everyone this way. Probably, it was her version of being friendly. 'Harmless banter', she'd call it. It wasn't her fault that Peggy was so bad at sticking up for herself, and so easy to make fun of. But at the end of the day, that didn't matter. She was making Peggy's life miserable, and Peggy couldn't forgive her for it.

So, as they walked towards each other, Peggy just fixed her eyes on the floor and silently prayed that Chief Carter didn't take any notice of her. She couldn't take one more mean comment. Not today. Hopefully, she was busy. Hopefully, she had something else on her mind. Hopefully, she was-

“Hey, Morgan. How’s it going?”

Her deep, cocksure, sultry voice was like nails on a chalkboard to the science officer. She kept her head down and quickened her pace, hoping against hope that Chief Carter would just let it go.

No such luck.

“Woah! What’s the hurry?”

Peggy felt herself thrown suddenly off balance as something slammed into her shoulder and spun her around. Immediately disoriented, she braced herself to hit the floor before she realized that, instead, something was bearing down on her and keeping her pressed firmly against the nearest bulkhead.

It was Chief Carter. The security chief had slammed her against the wall.

Immediately, Peggy was flinching and panicking. Physical abuse? She hadn’t imagined even Carter would sink quite that low. It was a major escalation. What was Peggy going to do? She could take it to the captain, yes, but that was slim consolation while she was getting her face pounded in by a brute of a security chief. Peggy started bringing her hands up to fend off the blows, shaking furiously.

“Hey,” Chief Carter said, in her very lowest, smokiest, most seductive voice. “Why such a hurry, cute thing? Surely whatever you’re doing tonight can’t be better than spending time with me.”

Peggy barked an awkward, disbelieving laugh. It took her a long moment to process, with disgust, that Chief Carter didn’t want to beat her.

She wanted to screw her.

Scarcely a more appealing proposition.

“G-g-g-get off m-me!” Peggy spluttered. Chief Carter just laughed good-naturedly.

“No need to be afraid, Morgan,” she cooed. “I don’t bite... much.”

Peggy felt like she was going to hurl. This was completely ludicrous.

“L-let me go!” Peggy doubled her efforts to squirm free. “Or I’ll... I’ll...”

To her surprise, Chief Carter actually eased up on her a little - although not enough for her to escape.

“C’m on. Is the prospect of spending an evening hanging out with me really that bad?” Chief Carter’s voice gave Peggy pause. She sounded surprisingly sincere.

“S-save it,” Peggy replied wearily. “You’re just making fun of me anyway.”

“Huh?” Now Chief Carter seemed all but wounded. “No, not at all. Why would you think that?”

“B-because it’s what you always do!” Peggy exploded. “I’m used to it by now, OK? You’re not gonna fool me that easily.”

“Morgan...” Chief Carter’s eyes turned big and deep and sorrowful. She reached down to gently caress Peggy’s cheek with the back of her hand. “I’m so sorry that you were hurting. I never knew.

Won't you let me make it up to you?"

Peggy was almost taken in. She let out a momentary gasp and lost herself briefly in Chief Carter's eyes, before reality once again reasserted herself. Chief Carter's charm was formidable, yes. It wasn't difficult to see how so many girls had been taken in by it. She'd say anything to get a girl into bed. But no matter how charming, she just wasn't Peggy's type. Peggy was into girls who were gentle and sweet. Girls she could share her interests with. Not brawny jocks.

"L-look!" Peggy cried as she tried to push Carter away. "I... I'm honestly not sure if you're joking or not, but I'm really not into you, OK? So, uh... thanks, but no thanks."

Chief Carter's whole face fell. She pulled back and withdrew her arm. "You won't even give me a chance, huh?"

"I-it's just... a little hard to believe." Peggy was taking deep breaths to calm herself. She'd never been so eager to get back to her quarters. "I mean... why would you even be interested in me?"

"Maybe I just think you're cute." Chief Carter shrugged. She still sounded dead serious. "Look at it this way: we're a long way from home out here on the *Inyx*. It's only natural to take a certain interest in each other. I... really want to learn more about you, Morgan."

"Oh." Peggy turned frosty and started turning away. "I see how it is. Y-you're just bored and looking for another notch on your bedpost, aren't you?"

She took a few steps away, but Chief Carter's powerful hand on her shoulder stopped her.

"No, wait!" The huge security chief sounded so ardent and desperate, it made Peggy freeze in her tracks. "Please let me

explain!”

At that moment, it dawned on Peggy that this was real. Chief Carter wasn't playing some kind of trick on her. Nobody was waiting around the corner to burst out and laugh. Somehow, for some reason, Chief Carter genuinely wanted to woo her.

It was a strange realization. It made Peggy grow warm with an unfamiliar, satisfying emotion. It made her feel powerful. She still didn't reciprocate Carter's feelings, of course. But she decided to hear her out. If nothing else, maybe a proper, firm rejection would teach her a little humility.

“Fine,” Peggy said firmly, turning back and folding her arms. “But tell me what's going on. And be quick about it. I have places to be.”

She didn't, really. Going back to her quarters to watch anime by herself didn't count. But it sounded good.

“OK, OK.” To Peggy's surprise, Chief Carter's face turned a deep red color and she looked around furtively. “I just... I think you're really cool. Seriously. And I actually think we might have a lot more in common than you realize. Maybe. With certain, uh, interests.”

Peggy frowned. “What are you talking about?”

Chief Carter glanced around again before saying, in a hushed voice: “You like anime, right?”

“H-huh?” Peggy's heart skipped a beat. “Um, yeah?”

The security chief checked yet again to make sure nobody else was around before she blurted out: “I'm a huge MaMeStaSe fangirl!”

Peggy froze. She stopped breathing. Of all the strange things she'd heard in the past five minutes, this was by far the most unbelievable.

'MaMeStaSe' was the preferred fan abbreviation for 'Magical Maidens Star Sentinels', a magical girl anime and Peggy's absolute favorite show of all time. It was a cult classic, and for Peggy, it had everything: incredible animation, brilliant characters, heartwarming themes, and titillating action. She'd rewatched it so many times she'd lost count, she'd plastered posters of it all over her walls, and she even had a body pillow of one of the protagonists. Meeting another fan aboard the *Inyx* was a dream come true.

But it was a little difficult to believe.

"You are?" Peggy didn't bother to hide her skepticism.

"Yes!" Chief Carter had a big grin on her face, like she couldn't contain her excitement. "I swear!"

"Prove it," Peggy told her flatly. "Do the pose."

She was absolutely sure that Carter wouldn't know what she was talking about, which made it all the more surprising when, without hesitation, Chief Carter performed an adorable little pirouette, struck an iconic pose, and, in a voice sparkling with hope and love, recited:

"In the name of the stars, I'll punish you!"

It was perfect. She was a true fan.

Peggy started bouncing up and down with glee. She couldn't help herself. She lunged forward and threw her hands around the security chief.

“Ohmigod!” she squealed. “It’s so good, right? It’s soooo good. I mean, the opening? The transformations? Hey, what’s your favorite arc? Have you read the manga? I like it too, don’t get me wrong, but to me, the anime is just so much more-“ Peggy cut herself off and blushed. “Oh no, I’m babbling.”

“No, no, don’t apologize!” Chief Carter exclaimed. She clasped Peggy’s hands and looked every bit as overcome with joy and excitement as Peggy felt. “I can’t wait to talk about everything. But, right now, I had something a little different in mind.”

“Oh?” She had Peggy’s full attention.

“Have you ever thought about recreating one of the episodes?” Chief Carter asked her.

“You mean, like, in the holodeck?” Peggy asked. She had; it was her favorite way to use her holorec time. She loved immersing herself in the fantasy, even if it wore off all too quickly once her time was up.

“No, better,” Chief Carter replied. “In real life!”

Peggy just tilted her head, confused.

“It turns out,” Chief Carter said, “Dr. Hiraga is a fan too! I only found out a little while ago, but she and I have been working on something down in medbay. Costumes, holographic assets - the works. But we need a third person. And you... well, nobody else knows Magical Maidens Star Sentinels the way you do.”

Peggy puffed up a little in pride upon hearing that.

“So, what do you say?” Chief Carter turned bashful again. “I’m...

sorry for coming on so strong earlier. It doesn't have to be, um, a date or anything. But I'd really love it if you'd come."

Peggy couldn't help but be endeared to this cuter, nerdier version of Chief Carter. Besides, hearing that Dr. Hiraga was an anime fan too was nothing short of breathtaking. Three magical girl fans on one ship? There was no way she could decline.

"Of course I'll come!" she replied. "We need to save the stars with the power of friendship, right?"

Chief Carter pulled Peggy into a huge bear hug, one that almost lifted her off her feet. Then she took Peggy by the end and started leading her down towards medbay.

* * *

Inside medbay, everything was dim. The main ceiling lights had been switched off, and instead the room was illuminated from strange angles by an array of holographic projectors mounted all over the walls. Peggy knew medbay had some holotech to support the emergency medical hologram, but this seemed excessive. Someone had been making some major upgrades.

That was just a stray observation, though. Peggy was far too preoccupied to dwell on it. She was busy wondering what was going to happen next. They'd hurried to medbay so quickly, she hadn't been able to ask any questions. What did recreating a magical girl anime in real life mean? And wasn't something missing here?

"Where's Dr. Hiraga?" Peggy asked quietly.

"Behind there."

Chief Carter pointed to where a holographic privacy screen had

been erected at the far end of the medbay. Peggy frowned.

“She’s... hiding? Why?”

“To help set the scene.”

Peggy’s frown deepened. “What does that mean, Carter?”

Infuriatingly, Chief Carter answered her question with a question. “Season Two. Episode thirty-seven. What happens?”

“Sentinel Green goes to try and save Sentinel Blue from the clutches of the evil Doctor Tomoe,” Peggy recited. “But the doctor makes Blue betray her, and both of them end up brainwashed. It’s one of my favorite episodes!”

For a fan of Peggy’s caliber, the question was trivial.

“Right!” Chief Carter said excitedly. “Isn’t this perfect? Medbay looks just like Doctor Tomoe’s evil lab!”

“It does,” Peggy admitted.

“We can do the whole scene!” Chief Carter exclaimed, overflowing with nerdy glee. “You can be Sentinel Green, I’ll be Sentinel Blue, and our very own ship’s doctor is perfect for the remaining role.”

“Oh, like roleplay!”

When Chief Carter nodded, Peggy was satisfied that she understood what was actually going on. It was still well outside of her comfort zone, though. Peggy adored roleplay. Losing herself in a shared fantasy was rewarding and intoxicating in a way nothing else could match. It was one of her favorite ways to pass time. But

she'd never done it in person, only over text. It was easy to get swept away by Chief Carter's enthusiasm, and by heady thoughts of fangirling together with her and Dr. Hiraga afterward.

"O-OK!" Peggy squeaked nervously. "Um... we all know the scene, right? How do we get started?"

Chief Carter's dorky grin widened. "We get into costume."

Peggy blinked, and then turned a deep red. "Y-you have costumes?"

Oh no. She hadn't expected this. If they were wearing costumes, then this went a step beyond simple roleplay.

It was cosplay.

"U-um," Peggy squeaked. "Maybe I should... uh... r-rewatch the episode first! And, um, I t-think I had a duty shift to cover later. And-"

"C'mon, Morgan." Chief Carter gave her shoulder a comradely squeeze. "Don't be like that. There's no need to be shy! I'm sure you know the episode like the back of your hand. And everything's ready right now. Trust me, your costume is perfect."

Peggy's blush deepened. She couldn't bring herself to back out. Not when she was finally getting the chance to be a part of something. She couldn't face going back to her quarters alone. She had to participate. There was just one problem.

Science Officer Peggy Morgan had a huge cosplay fetish.

She couldn't explain it. Not really. But there was something special - no, magical - about cosplay. Seeing a character come to life

through costume and performance felt like nothing short of a miracle. The holodeck never had the same appeal. Holograms were just light with a little pre-scripted AI running behind them. Cosplay was real. It was transformation. When Peggy saw a cosplayer truly become the character they were cosplaying, it made her feel like anything was possible - even for a mousy nerd like her.

That was her fascination. But, admittedly, her fetish went beyond that. Peggy couldn't explain why cosplayers turned her on so much. Maybe it was their mannerisms, so fictive and exaggerated. It was almost mesmerizing, seeing a flesh-and-blood person follow a script intended for an animated character. Maybe it was their beauty, so stylized it was almost unreal. Maybe it was what they represented: characters that she was used to seeing as drawings or dolls come to life, but still presenting themselves to be looked at and played with and enjoyed. It just turned her on like nothing else.

And, of course, plenty of cosplays were far from innocent. Erotic cosplay frequently left Peggy drooling. Sometimes, when she was alone in her quarters, she would spend hours scrolling through massive archives of pictures until her own arousal and pleasure grew to be too much. But even regular cosplay excited her to an embarrassing degree. In the past, she'd excused herself from costume parties, just in case they got her a little too worked up.

But now she had to cosplay alongside Chief Carter and Dr. Hiraga.

All without giving herself away.

"Here's yours." Chief Carter, oblivious to Peggy's inner turmoil, picked up a bundle of green clothes from a nearby table and handed it to her. "Try it on! Don't worry, I pulled your uniform size from the databanks as I replicated it. It should be perfect. I've got mine too. Let me give you some privacy."

Before Peggy could say anything, she headed off to a far corner of the room and activated another holographic privacy screen, hiding her and Peggy from one another. Now that she was, relatively speaking, alone, Peggy took a deep breath and looked down at the clothing in her hands.

It was immaculately designed. Replicators could make anything, of course, but making sure the stitching, fit, and design were all just right could be a labor of love, and Peggy could tell that no effort had been spared here. This was Sentinel Green's magical outfit, right down to every last detail of the frills and ribbons. There was, at first glance, just one issue.

It was latex.

There was usually a level of interpretation when it came to deciding what materials to use for cosplay. Animation, after all, rarely made it clear precisely what was intended. But shiny, bright, smooth rubber was certainly quite the choice. Thinking about what this was going to look like on her made Peggy shiver with equal parts anxiety and anticipation.

She considered refusing, but this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. She had to. Which meant there was nothing for Peggy to do but try on the cosplay.

Peggy removed her Alliance uniform swiftly and efficiently. She was used to that part. Putting on a magical girl cosplay outfit was something else entirely. But once she experimentally slipped one of her feet into one of the white, embroidered, thigh-high socks, something came over her. It was like she was possessed by something; a feverish enthusiasm that had her limbs moving in a hurried frenzy and putting on the cosplay like it was second nature. Before she knew it, Peggy was wearing the whole thing.

She shivered. It felt amazing.

And it was so, so skimpy.

Once the initial rush wore off, Peggy was stunned by how much air she could feel on her bare skin. Admittedly, the outfits in Magical Maidens Star Sentinels were, according to some, pretty revealing. The term 'fanservice' was frequently bandied around. Peggy had always ardently insisted that it was unfair, and that the designs were perfectly tasteful as long as you looked at them in the right light.

She was now reconsidering that stance.

The blouse, while tailored to fit Peggy, was clearly intended to suit the slim proportions of an anime character; as a result, it left the layer of puppy fat on Peggy's tummy embarrassingly prominent. The same was true for her thick thighs, on two counts: they muffin-topped over the thigh-highs, and threatened to make the pleated, too-short skirt ride up every time she moved. The fact it was all so brightly colored, so shiny and green, made it all the more lurid, and the way everything was styled, with frills and ruffles and sparkling gemstones, took the ensemble to another level.

Peggy had never been more embarrassed, and she had never been more turned on.

"Morgan?" Chief Carter called out, from behind the privacy screen. "Changed?"

"Y-yeah," Peggy answered without thinking. Then: "W-wait, no, d-don't come-"

It was too late. Carter flicked off the privacy screen, and the two of them saw each other. For a moment Peggy thought she was going to die from embarrassment - but then that thought, just like all her other thoughts, was obliterated as she lost herself in the sight of Chief Carter in her cosplay.

Her outfit was the same as Peggy's except in blue instead of green, and yet somehow, it looked completely different. The similarity in design simply brought out the contrast in their physiques. In Chief Carter's case, the tight-fitting, revealing magical girl outfit seemed to be struggling to contain her proud, sculpted muscles. The result was similar to what was going on with Peggy, where her clothes were threatening to ride up all over, but the effect was totally different. It accentuated the triangular shape of her torso and all the work she put into her abs.

God, her abs. Peggy had never really deigned to notice just how appealing muscular girls could be, but the latex outfit shed Carter's physique in such a new light, she couldn't help but stare. It conformed so tightly to her torso, each one of her abs had its own, shiny highlight from medbay's dim lights. The effect was nothing short of pornographic, and Peggy was enraptured. The best part was how strange it all looked on her. The tall, swaggering security chief would never normally dress in something so bright and attention-grabbing. The way it transformed her was, to Peggy, both erotic and magical.

Chief Carter *was* Sentinel Blue.

It made Peggy wonder how she seemed. Had she been transformed too? It was such an exciting thought, and Chief Carter's reaction confirmed it for her immediately.

"Oh my gosh!" she squealed uncharacteristically. "Morgan, I knew it! You're perfect."

Heat rose in Peggy's body. She looked away. "R-really?" she asked bashfully.

"Hell yes!"

The sparkling enthusiasm in Chief Carter's eyes left no room for doubt. Peggy was beyond euphoric. It was all she could do to keep herself from bouncing up and down. She was cosplaying as a character from her favorite show. It was a wet dream come true.

"But... um... why l-latex?" Peggy ventured. "It's a little..."

"Oh, that was the doctor's call," Carter replied. "Doesn't it look magical? The way it shines, it's like it's glowing!"

Peggy couldn't disagree with that. She was utterly captivated, and her head was filling with unspeakable fantasies about all the things she suddenly wanted to do with Chief Carter. It was strange; dressed normally, she had no interest in the muscular woman. Dressed like this, she was a fantasy made flesh. She was irresistible.

"So," Chief Carter said, striking a small pose. She was radiating joyful confidence. "Shall we get started?"

Peggy walked over to her, trembling with nervousness, trying to ignore the way her thighs rubbed together pleasurably with each step.

"S-sure," Peggy struggled to say. She decided to try looking at the floor. That seemed safest. "So, um... w-what now?"

"Well, we're all ready!" Chief Carter's uncharacteristically innocent enthusiasm was an uncannily perfect match for her magical girl cosplay. Peggy tried not to think about that too much. "We all know how the story is supposed to go. So... places! You can start over by the door. And I'll..."

Chief Carter clambered onto one of medbay's many examination chairs, which immediately reclined to accept her. Without warning, restraints mounted within the bed snapped shut around her wrists and ankles. The sound made Peggy jump, and she

scampered over to the medbay door.

Abruptly, the lights shifted. This was it. The scene was starting.

Immediately, Peggy was struck by the realization that, metaphorically speaking, all eyes were now on her. Sentinel Green was the hero of the scene. It was on her to get the ball rolling. She knew the script practically line by line, but acting it out properly was another matter. Peggy had never done anything like it before. She wasn't even sure if she could.

But the more she thought about it, the more a strange, nervous excitement started to flood her limbs. It was the same feeling Peggy got when she was standing a little too close to the edge of a high precipice. The urge to take a leap of faith. To throw herself into the role. Her body burned with it and so Peggy let it take her, and stepped forwards.

"Blue!" she called out, her voice sounding, even to her own ears, brighter and clearer. Peggy took a few cautious steps into medbay - no, into Doctor Tomoe's evil lab. "Sentinel Blue! Blue, I'm here to rescue you!"

"Green?" came the weak, weary reply. It was Chief Carter - no, Sentinel Blue - no, both. "Is that really you?"

Peggy rushed to her side at once. It was strange; now that she was playing a role, it was so much easier to stand taller and feel braver. She was a Star Sentinel. A hero. And she was here to save her comrade.

Looking down at Chief Carter in cosplay, though, made her feel anything but heroic. All of the shameful, secret feelings she'd experienced earlier came surging back - but they were all the stronger now that Chief Carter was like this: prone, helpless, restrained. With her arms trapped at her sides, her body was even

more exposed, and the knowledge that she couldn't resist anything being done to her was dizzyingly titillating.

It was like she was a doll. A toy to be played with. And it made Peggy itch to touch her.

Instead, she stayed on script. "Blue! I'm so glad I found you. Let's get you out of here. Can you break out of those restraints?"

Chief Carter followed the script perfectly and began to strain against her bonds. Sentinel Blue was strong, but they were stronger. With all her muscles, Peggy wondered if Chief Carter might actually be able to bust out, but it appeared not. Just like in the episode of MaMeStaSe, she eventually gave up and slumped back into the examination chair, flushed and gleaming with sweat from her exertion.

There was, however, one major difference between the Sentinel Blue Peggy was looking at now, and the one from her beloved anime.

This Sentinel Blue was blatantly extremely turned on.

There was no mistaking it. Her cheeks were burning red from more than just strain, and there was a lurid shine to her eyes. She was panting far more than was reasonable, and with her cosplay outfit so absolutely tight around her body, Peggy could see that her nipples were forming two hard little bullets underneath the latex.

The sight was mesmerizing.

"S-Sentinel Blue?" Peggy ventured. She wasn't sure what to do.

"I-I guess I'm not... s-strong enough," Chief Carter panted. The confession made her squirm. It was obvious it excited her. "You'll

have to... to set me free.”

She was sticking to the script, at least as far as the dialogue was concerned. Was Peggy supposed to play along, like nothing strange was happening? That seemed absurd, and yet there was something irresistible about it. It was like she'd be living in a work of pornography.

Peggy decided to keep going. If nothing else, she couldn't help wanting to see Chief Carter squirm even more.

“I'll look around,” she said in an urgent stage whisper. “We just need to get you out before-“

“Before I return?”

Dr. Hiraga's voice, coming from behind the holographic privacy screen at the far end of medbay, sent chills down Peggy's spine. She knew Dr. Hiraga, of course. Everybody on the ship did. But she sounded different now. Her voice was colder and more sinister. She sounded like a villainess.

It was perfect for the role of Doctor Tomoe.

“Doctor Tomoe!” Peggy cried right on cue, dropping into a fighting stance. “But you're supposed to be on the other side of the city!”

“Did you really think I would fall for that cheap distraction?” Doctor Tomoe cackled. “I sent my minions to take care of it. Your friends are tied up fighting them. Which means you're here, alone, with me.”

She stepped out from behind the privacy screen and, even though it was true to the script, there was nothing planned or

intended about the way Peggy gasped.

Dr. Hiraga was in cosplay too, of course, and her outfit was a perfect match for Doctor Tomoe's. In MaMeStaSe, the evil scientist wore a long, white lab coat over a sleek, black bodysuit of some kind. And in keeping with the other cosplays, Dr. Hiraga had chosen to render the bodysuit in black latex, polished to a mirror sheen.

In the past, Peggy had never given Dr. Hiraga's body a second thought. Now, it was impossible to ignore. Every single one of her indulgent, middle-aged curves was highlighted by the way the light glistened off the shining rubber. It was glorious. Peggy forgot how rude it was to stare. Not drooling was the most she could manage. Dr. Hiraga was shining like a dark star. Unlike the magical girl cosplays, hers was suggestive only in its sleekness. It wasn't revealing or needlessly tight. It made her feel more dignified than Peggy or Chief Carter. It made her powerful.

She had become Doctor Tomoe.

The cognitive dissonance hitting Peggy was hypnotic. It was like she was looking at two people at once. The gentle, caring Dr. Hiraga, and the evil, indomitable Doctor Tomoe. It seemed just as impossible for Dr. Hiraga to be so imposing and sinister as it did for Doctor Tomoe to be here, real, in the flesh. It was a perfect cosplay. She kept instinctively searching for some missing detail, for something out of place, but there was nothing. Even her makeup, thick and sharp and dark, was perfect for the character.

Which was a huge problem, since the character in question had been the source of some of Peggy's biggest sexual awakenings.

"Surprised?" Dr. Hiraga - no, Doctor Tomoe - no, both - cocked an eyebrow, amused. "You should be. I have you exactly where I want you, Sentinel Green."

“How dare you!” The scripted words came effortlessly to Peggy’s lips. She couldn’t break the scene, no matter how flustered she was. “In the name of the stars, I’ll bring you to justice!”

“Oh? All on your own?” Dr. Hiraga’s smirk was so perfectly mocking and superior, that Peggy couldn’t believe it was acted. She was utterly convincing. “You’re not so strong without your magical little friends.”

Peggy squirmed at her dripping, molten contempt. A hundred scenarios flashed through her mind, each more perverse and depraved than the last. Her mind, tainted by countless hours of staring adoringly at lewd cosplays, was working overdrive. Peggy couldn’t count how many times she’d blown off steam thinking about Doctor Tomoe. But no matter what, she had to stick to the script.

“I’m not the one who’s alone!” she shot back. Even though she was insanely turned on, her voice sounded heroic and full of innocent conviction. Dr. Hiraga was a perfect Doctor Tomoe, but Peggy was managing a decent Sentinel Green. “You don’t have your minions here. And I have my friend right by my side!”

“She’s a little tied down at the moment,” Dr. Hiraga sneered viciously. “She won’t be any help to you!”

“That’s what you think!” Peggy cried. “But with the power of friendship and justice on our side, we can overcome anything!”

Now she was the one panting and struggling to keep the lust out of her voice. Nevertheless, she reached across Chief Carter to put her hands on one of the metal shackles keeping her trapped against the examination chair. In the episode, Sentinel Green summoned her magic and used it to set Sentinel Blue free. Hopefully, Dr. Hiraga and Chief Carter had set things up so that if she just tugged a little bit, the manacles would release of their own volition.

Sure enough, they did. Even though it was all fake, in that moment, Peggy felt genuinely heroic. She was channeling the emotion of the scene, and that made it easy to plant her hands squarely on her hips as she stared down the villainous Doctor Tomoe.

“There! Now it’s two against one,” Peggy declared. “Surrender now, Doctor Tomoe. Or else.”

Chief Carter rose to her feet to stand beside her, gently nursing her wrists. The two of them made a perfect matching pair as they squared off against the doctor, even if Chief Carter seemed, somehow, a touch disappointed. Thanks to the magic of the moment, her presence made Peggy feel that much stronger and braver. Even though they were both wearing porno latex. Even though she knew exactly what was about to happen.

“Is that so?” Dr. Hiraga purred. “You’re right about one thing, Sentinel Green. It is two against one - just not the way you think.”

Lazily, she raised a hand and snapped her fingers.

Peggy looked round sharply as she sensed Chief Carter abruptly start to sway. Immediately, she froze. She had been expecting, maybe, a convincing performance of being stunned or entranced. Despite the strange reaction she’d had to the restraints, Chief Carter was proving to be a surprisingly skilled performer. What Peggy saw now, though, went far beyond acting.

Chief Carter had spirals in her eyes.

It was impossible. At first Peggy thought it had to be a trick of light, but no. The more she stared, the more it became clear that this was completely and totally real. Chief Carter’s eyes had become spinning, spiraling orbs, each one glowing from within with an

unfathomable light. Peggy couldn't believe how accurate to the anime it was. The way Chief Carter had swayed and sagged as if totally drained of mind and thought was just as perfect.

"W-what have you done to her?" Peggy breathed. It was Sentinel Green's line, but the question was genuine.

"No one can resist my treatment!" Dr. Hiraga cackled. "Not even the Star Sentinels. Sentinel Blue is mine now. She's one of my minions. And soon, you will be too."

"N-no," Peggy gasped. She was completely caught up in the emotion of the scene. She remembered the sense of dawning shock and horror she'd felt so many times, watching this moment unfold. Now, she was living it.

"Oh yes," Dr. Hiraga crowed. "You'll soon see! Minion, seize her!"

Peggy shivered and squirmed as she felt Chief Carter's powerful hands seize her by the shoulders.

"Blue!" Peggy let her voice become a high-pitched, girly shriek. "What are you doing?"

"She can't hear you now," Dr. Hiraga warned. "Minion, strap her to the chair!"

Peggy hadn't thought this far ahead, and so she wasn't prepared for the way Chief Carter lifted her bodily off the ground without the slightest hint of real effort. Evidently, when she'd pushed the science officer against the wall earlier, she'd been using a bare fraction of her true strength. When Peggy felt her feet leave the floor, the way she writhed in a frantic bid to squirm free wasn't acted. It was very, very real.

Fortunately for her, Chief Carter wasted no time in swinging her around and placing her down firmly on the exam chair. An instant later, she was forcing Peggy's hands into the same manacles she herself had just been freed from. Peggy was too stunned to say anything, and what had stunned her the most was Chief Carter's complete lack of gentleness. The chief had been so friendly and enthusiastic, but now she was throwing Peggy around like she was nothing more than a sack of meat.

Almost like she was really brainwashed.

It was a silly thought, but Peggy couldn't seem to shake it. There was just no way Chief Carter was actually this good of an actor. Everything about the way she moved and carried herself was unnatural and rigid. It was too perfect. And then there were her eyes. Peggy had seen plenty of cheap cosplay tricks. Enough to know that they weren't just a trick. Most alarmingly of all, when she stared into Chief Carter's eyes for just a little too long, she could feel herself starting to slip under the spirals' hypnotic influence.

Something strange was happening.

So shouldn't she say something? Do something? Call the scene to a halt? That would have been the responsible thing to do. But Peggy couldn't make herself do it. There was a magic to the moment. To the way they were all three of them caught up in the flow of the scene, living out their characters' actions, feeling all their sensations and feelings.

It was everything Peggy could have ever asked for. She couldn't give it up.

"Not so strong now, are you?" Dr. Hiraga mocked. She moved to stand over Peggy, and from where the science officer was sitting she seemed more imposing than ever. "You Star Sentinels are so easy to fool."

Peggy's mouth was dry, but she forced herself to stick to the script.

"S-Sentinel Blue!" she cried out in a decidedly uneven voice. "You have to listen to me! You have to fight! You can beat this! Resist!"

Chief Carter opened her mouth and for a moment, despite the source material, Peggy found herself hoping she would find the strength to fight off the mind control.

Instead, all she said was: "I obey Doctor Tomoe," in a droning, monotone voice that was so far away from Chief Carter's usual, brash tones it made Peggy whimper.

"It's no use," Dr. Hiraga sneered. "She's completely under my control. And soon, you'll be just like her."

"N-never!" Peggy tried to sound defiant, just like Sentinel Green. Instead, she sounded like she was moaning. It was like she was a porn parody of the real thing - a thought that drove her wild with need.

"Ridiculous!" Dr. Hiraga threw back her head and laughed. "You're powerless, Sentinel Green! Look, you can't even brush my hand away."

Peggy went very, very still as Dr. Hiraga reached down and rested a latex-gloved hand on her thigh, up under the hem of her skirt.

This was it. It was an infamous moment in the anime, depicted in a thousand less-than-savory fanworks - especially ones by lesbian fans. Peggy had always steadfastly maintained that it was a simple illustration of Doctor Tomoe's lack of respect for others, but it was hard to deny that there was something titillating about it.

Peggy, turned on as she was, had mostly been hoping she wouldn't do something embarrassing like squirm or moan. She had been sure Dr. Hiraga would barely even touch her. It was just roleplay, right?

Instead, Dr. Hiraga started openly groping her.

At first, when Peggy first felt the doctor's fingers pressing roughly and insistently into the flesh of her pale, exposed, sensitive thighs, she couldn't believe what was happening. Surely it was just a mistake. Surely Dr. Hiraga was just about to break character and apologize. But no - she just kept going, and with each passing moment, her grin widened and her fingers reached further up Peggy's hips.

The look in the doctor's eyes was the most shocking part of it. They were shining with glee and malice, like she was drunk on the pleasure of violating Peggy's body. It was completely authentic and sincere, and completely unlike Dr. Hiraga.

But perfect for Doctor Tomoe.

Before Peggy could dwell on that, the sensations filling her body overtook her shock. Her back arched, and she was forced to gasp and pant for each breath. Her cheeks turned the deepest red as she was drowned in overwhelming embarrassment and shame over how she was reacting. But she couldn't help it. Being touched like this felt amazing, even though she wasn't sure why.

Maybe it was because she'd watched this scene in the anime hundreds of times, fascinated by how it looked, imagining how it might feel, wondering what it would be like to look up helplessly at Doctor Tomoe. And now she was living it. She was living her fantasy, and her whole body was electric with the thrill.

“You see?” Dr. Hiraga mocked. “Helpless.”

Her hand reached further, pushing up her tiny latex skirt and beginning to touch at the hem of her panties. Peggy couldn't help but moan, but even as she did she was wracked with confusion. Had Doctor Tomoe gone quite this far in the anime? Wasn't this a little too much? She couldn't exactly remember. It was getting so hard to think clearly.

“G-g-get off me!” Peggy whined. She sounded unconvincing - but then again, so had Sentinel Green in a few moments. “Y-you'll pay for this!”

“We'll see about that,” Dr. Hiraga purred. She brought her other hand to Peggy's chest and started groping her there, too. There was something magical about the sensation of latex on latex. “Soon enough, you'll accept me eagerly. You'll profess your undying devotion and obedience. You'll beg for me.”

“N-n-never!” Peggy moaned as Dr. Hiraga squeezed her tits and stroked the lips of her cunt.

They were off-script now, she was sure of it. Doctor Tomoe had never touched Sentinel Green like this. So... she should put a stop to this, right? That thought nagged at her again. Wouldn't that be the right thing to do? Young though Peggy was, she was still an officer. Things like this weren't supposed to happen on a military vessel. But in the moment, she was struggling to think about that.

She was too busy thinking about how wet she was. Too busy struggling to figure out if she wanted Dr. Hiraga to notice or not.

The fantasy was too powerful. She couldn't sacrifice it. She wanted - she needed - to immerse herself deeper, no matter how twisted it was getting. Where was she ever going to find this feeling again?

All she needed to do was stop thinking and lose herself to the wet dream. She was being groped by Doctor Tomoe. By the hottest villainess in all of fiction. It was amazing.

It was so amazing, she whined in disappointment when Dr. Hiraga finally pulled away. The doctor noticed, and the look of scorn that flashed through her eyes made Peggy's cunt clench.

"I can't wait to brainwash you to our cause," Doctor Tomoe declared. "But the pleasure won't be all mine. My dark mistress wishes to see you fall."

Peggy's eyes flew wide. She'd almost forgotten. The big twist of this arc of Magical Maidens Star Sentinels was that Doctor Tomoe was, herself, brainwashed - by the true villain, Queen Betalia. What did that mean? What was going to happen? When Queen Betalia showed up, she was more of a looming, shadowy presence than a real character. A hologram, perhaps?

"Queen Betalia!" Dr. Hiraga cried out theatrically. "We beseech you! Appear before us!"

There was a distinctive hum as holographic projectors concealed around medbay flickered into life. Peggy wasn't sure what she had been expecting to see, but the very last thing she'd anticipated was an ominous, familiar figure with dyed hair, wild eyes, and dozens of visible tattoos and piercings.

It was Wasp. The vandal-hacker the *Inyx* was hunting.

As science officer, Peggy wasn't as motivated as some of the other crew members by the thought of catching her. She was in it for the experience, and to study any anomalies they came across. But she'd still been in all the briefings. She knew exactly who this woman was, even if she couldn't begin to fathom what exactly her presence here

meant.

Wasp, unlike the rest of them, wasn't wearing any kind of cosplay. She was dressed in what Peggy understood to be her typical attire: leggings, a big, punk battle jacket, and a sports bra. But if that wasn't enough to set her apart from the role-players, the way she leered at Peggy and cackled certainly was.

"You know, you're really a girl after my own heart," Wasp said to Peggy in an absurdly conversational voice. "I mean, I'm a hacker, right? Deep down I'm a huge nerd. Not that I've ever taken it as far as you. That's one hell of a hentai collection buried in your personal computer files."

Peggy craned her head to look at Chief Carter and Dr. Hiraga. Chillingly, neither one of them had reacted to Wasp's holographic presence in any way. Both of them were just standing there like statues. Like dolls who had been momentarily set aside.

This was really bad.

"Oh, don't worry about them," Wasp told her. "In fact..."

She snapped her fingers in Dr. Hiraga's face. An instant later, Dr. Hiraga's eyes turned into glowing, spinning spirals. The exact same spirals that Peggy could see in Chief Carter's.

This was really, really bad.

Peggy's mind, still sluggish from arousal and fantasy, was struggling to parse what this meant. Were they still roleplaying? It seemed unlikely. If Wasp was meant to be Queen Betalia, she wasn't in character, or even in cosplay. Why would it be her? And if she was just a hologram, why was she veering off script and breaking the fourth wall?

But what was the alternative? That Wasp, a hacker, had infiltrated the *Inyx's* systems and somehow brainwashed senior members of the crew? That was even more difficult to face up to.

"Hey, hey, relax," Wasp added when she noticed Peggy's growing distress. "Just think of me as part of your little roleplay. Just an unexpected little twist. That's how this is supposed to go, right? The big bad shows up, trances the doc, and then the magical girl gets brainwashed. Trust me, I'm not going to ruin your fun on that count. That's the very last thing I'd want."

Peggy just kept glancing nervously between Chief Carter and Dr. Hiraga for clarification. She wasn't sure what to believe. She tugged against her restraints again, hoping against hope that they might come loose.

"L-let me go," Peggy protested weakly. "You'll pay for this!"

They were just the words that popped into her head. They felt right. But they were also Sentinel Green's words.

Wasp seemed to pick up on that. "That's right," she urged. "Just lie back, magical girl. Enjoy the ride. Hell, enjoy the view."

"B-but..." Peggy spluttered uncertainly, once again half-consciously echoing her character, "But... but..."

"Just look at them." Wasp gestured towards Chief Carter and Dr. Hiraga, drawing Peggys' eye. "Aren't they perfect? Isn't this exactly what you wanted?"

Once Peggy looked, she couldn't look away. There was something spellbinding about seeing her fellow officers like this. The cosplay, of course, sent forbidden thrills of pleasure running down Peggy's spine, but so did the way they were just standing there, devoid of emotion or personality. They looked so empty. They were

like toys, waiting to be played with. Like figurines, waiting to be posed.

“Or... maybe you’d prefer it like this.”

Wasp made a show of snapping her fingers again. As she did, Chief Carter and Dr. Hiraga shuddered back to life, although their eyes didn’t return to normal. Instead, their spirals shifted color to a deep, pink tint. They didn’t react to Peggy or Wasp either. Without warning, the two women stared intently at each other and then rushed into one another’s arms.

“Oh, Sentinel Blue!” Dr. Hiraga cried, in a voice uncharacteristically thick with unrestrained emotion. “I can’t pretend anymore! It was always you.”

“I know!” Sentinel Blue wailed. “The truth is, I never cared about Sentinel Yellow. I never cared about justice or vanquishing evil. I don’t think I ever cared about anything but you. I love you!”

The two of them started mashing their faces together in a deep, clumsy, passionate kiss. The little scene playing out between them was so strange and melodramatic it was almost comical, but Peggy wasn’t laughing. She was enthralled. She recognized this - their words, their kissing.

It was from a work of fanfiction. A work of fanfiction she’d written, years ago.

As the two brainwashed officers kept kissing and grabbing at each other in their overenthusiastic display of affection, Peggy couldn’t dream of looking away. She couldn’t even bring herself to feel guilty about staring. After all, this was yet another of her fantasies come to life. They were literally following her script. Wasn’t she meant to look? Weren’t these two supposed to be looked at?

That's what cosplay was all about.

The sheer, blatant, fetishistic nature of their latex outfits only accentuated that further. Ogling them for Peggy's enjoyment just seemed right. They were dolls. Dolls were meant to be played with. That was obvious.

Her anguish over her situation was starting to abate, and her cunt was starting to drip down onto the examination chair beneath her.

"Or," Wasp added, "it could be like this."

The hacker snapped her fingers yet again, and Dr. Hiraga and Chief Carter's eyes changed color once more. Without any hesitation, they broke off from kissing. All of the overflowing, ardent longing they had been expressing drained away into nothing. Moving in eerie synchronization, they knelt next to the examination chair Peggy was restrained in, one on each side of her.

"Sentinel Green," Chief Carter whispered, in a low, breathy, seductive voice that made Peggy's whole body tingle. "We're all yours. We're here to service you."

Peggy whimpered as raw need washed over her.

"We'll do anything," came Dr. Hiraga's voice from her other side. Hearing Doctor Tomoe talk like this was driving Peggy crazy. She sounded like an actress from a cheap porno. "We just want to make you feel good."

As one, they lowered their mouths to her body and started kissing, licking, sucking across her bare skin, all along her legs and arms. Peggy couldn't keep herself from squirming wildly, but with the restraints keeping her limbs trapped, there was no escape. She couldn't believe how sensitive her body had become.

It was the cosplay and the roleplay. Layers upon layers of fantasy and fiction, each one heightening the fetishistic appeal even more. The way Chief Carter and Dr. Hiraga were behaving now was unmistakably pornographic, and that was the hottest thing of all for Peggy. She was watching them debase her favorite characters, all for her titillation and her pleasure.

“Do you know the best part?” Wasp commented, grinning wickedly. “They’re not acting. Not pretending. Oh no. I made them believe. To them, you’re really Sentinel Green.”

Peggy flushed and shivered. God, that was so hot.

“And in a way, they’re not wrong,” Wasp mused. “Just look at yourself. You’re just like them. You fit in perfectly. The costumes really are perfect. It suits you.”

Peggy wasn’t sure why being complimented by a villain and a criminal made her body throb with fresh pleasure - but it did. This was all she wanted. To be Sentinel Green. To submerge into the character. To look good and hot in her cosplay. Nothing could be more arousing.

“You know,” Wasp added leadingly, “if anyone walked in here right now, they wouldn’t be able to see the difference between you and them. I’m not sure I can.”

That comment lit a fire in Peggy’s mind. No difference. It made sense, when she looked down at herself. She was dressed just as provocatively. She was acting just as pornographically.

Just like them, she was a doll.

Something to be posed. Something to be played with.

As Peggy continued to moan and squirm, Wasp bent down and put her lips to Peggy's ear.

"And," she whispered, "in just a moment, I'm going to make you exactly like them. I'm going to make you mine."

Peggy froze. She'd been getting lost in the fantasy. But as much as she wanted to be Sentinel Green, she was Peggy Morgan too. She was the *Inyx's* science officer. She had a responsibility to the crew.

And yet...

"Don't get me wrong," Wasp added, straightening. "You don't have any choice about it. I'm sure you're already plenty wound up. There's no way you can resist. I'm just saying, it's up to you how you want to feel about it."

"W... what...?" Peggy managed, desperately confused.

"I'm just saying." Wasp shrugged. "Who needs boring old reality, when you can live a fantasy like this. Am I right?"

Peggy's back suddenly arched as Dr. Hiraga planted a kiss dangerously close to her needy, throbbing cunt. Clear thought was a distant memory. What Wasp was suggesting should have horrified her - but it didn't. Instead, one single, powerful observation was at the forefront of her mind.

In all the time she'd spent on the *Inyx*, this was the best she'd ever felt.

Something inside the nerdy science officer snapped. She made her voice.

"Y-you can't!" she cried out desperately. "I'll never betray my

comrades! You c-can't make me!"

It should have been a cry of defiance, but the words weren't hers.

They were Sentinel Green's.

"Atta girl." Wasp laughed. "I won't sugarcoat it, though. You're totally gonna betray everyone. I'm gonna use your smarts to perfect this little implant-brainwashing procedure the doc and I have been working on. No more breaking down resistance. One little zap is all it'll take. Soon enough, everyone on this fucking ship is gonna be under my spell."

Peggy just moaned. It felt so right. Sentinel Green, brainwashed to betray her allies. That was how the story was supposed to go.

"But you'll have fun," Wasp told her. "I can promise you that. I can have endless fun with you. And with the chief, and the doctor. And, who knows? Maybe once I've got the whole ship, we can put the rest of the Star Sentinels together."

For just one single word, Peggy let herself break from the script and say something Sentinel Green never would have said.

"P-please!"

Wasp laughed again, and snapped her fingers. Chief Carter and Dr. Hiraga rose to their feet and backed away. Wasp drew herself up theatrically.

"Y'know, I'm glad you asked so nicely. I may have gone a little overboard when I was planning this out. It took a little time to get the hardlight holograms to look and work just right. But I don't regret the effort. I figure you'll appreciate the fanservice."

She extended a hand down towards Peggy, and there was a loud hum as the medbay's holographic projectors kicked into overdrive. An instant later, two tendrils made of something shiny and black erupted from Wasp's hand. They were fake, of course - they had to be - but they were as real as Wasp, and she'd already proven how dangerous she could be.

And more importantly, within the fantasy Peggy had surrendered to, they were all-powerful. Shadowy conduits of Queen Betalia's will.

The tendrils looked like they were made of the same kind of latex as the cosplays, shiny and alluring, but they moved like living creatures, snaking towards Peggy before pouncing on her, one on each side of her head, and burrowing deep into her ears.

Peggy shuddered for a moment as she felt something cold and malevolent touch something deep inside her, implanting something there, behind her eyes.

And then, as the holo-stimulant implant came to life, her eyes were drowned in glowing spirals, and she thought about nothing at all.

* * *

As she peeked through a tiny crack in the door to medbay and beheld the debauchery unfolding within, Crewman Lori Delaney tried her hardest to keep perfectly still and quiet. She'd come down here after, as usual, feigning sickness to get off her duty shift. Dr. Hiraga was a soft touch; it was usually easy to convince her to provide a doctor's note and let Delaney rest for a few hours instead of working. Other officers would usually catch on and chew her out, though, so she'd developed the habit of opening the door a crack so she could peek through and make sure nobody annoying was

around.

Starship doors weren't supposed to open like that. Especially not when they were locked. But with a little hotwiring, anything was possible.

Today, she'd found far more than she'd been expecting. Something truly weird was happening in medbay - and clearly, it involved Wasp. Delaney didn't care about the *Inyx's* duty to catch her even a little bit. In fact, she was tired of their uptight bitch of a captain's constant lectures about it. But that didn't mean she had any sympathy for a preening, attention-grabbing asshole like Wasp. And given that she clearly already had several members of the crew under her control, there was really only one thing Lori Delaney could do.

She rose silently to her feet and ran off to find Captain Vasser.

CHAPTER FIVE

Crewman Lori Delaney made her way to the bridge of the starship *Inyx* in fits and starts. She sprinted in bursts, pounding the deck beneath her feet because she was running so urgently, but every now and then she stopped - not just to catch her breath, but because she needed to ask herself whether or not she was crazy.

What she'd seen in medbay defied all sense. Dr. Hiraga, Chief Samira Carter, and that dorky science officer, Morgan, acting out some kind of crazy fantasy, dressed in absolutely ludicrous outfits, whilst Wasp, the hacker they were supposed to be hunting, lorded over it all. If someone told Delaney they'd seen something like that, she'd never believe them. Not if they swore on a hundred years of replicator rations.

But she couldn't dismiss the very last part of what she'd seen. Wasp had some kind of brainwashing device she was going to use to take over the *Inyx*. And it was almost perfected. Hearing that had made Delaney's blood run cold. She needed to act, but she was just a petty crewman. She was powerless. She needed help, but if Dr. Hiraga and the ship's security officer had already fallen, there was no telling who else might already be in the hacker's clutches.

There was only one person Delaney could think to turn to: Captain Yvonne Vasser.

It was funny. Normally, there was no one Delaney wanted to see less. Captain Vasser was the very worst kind of commanding officer:

one who truly believed in all of Alliance Starfleet's bullshit about protocol, professionalism, and discipline. Most captains would allow a little leniency on a long tour of duty like this. Not Vasser. She was always on Delaney's ass - about her uniform, about showing up a little late to her duty shifts, and about a hundred other tiny little rules and regulations Delaney didn't give a shit about. And when it wasn't her, it was her pet thug, Carter.

Why couldn't Vasser take the hint, and accept that Delaney was only in this job for the paycheck and the training? And why did she care about petty crewmen in the first place? Didn't she have more important things to pay attention to?

In a situation like this, though, Delaney couldn't imagine anyone else she'd sooner tell. Captain Vasser was a legend. A machine. She was untouchable. Even if everyone else on the Inyx fell to Wasp, she'd fight tooth and nail to set them free. Delaney was sure that Captain Vasser would know exactly what to do.

"Where's the captain?" Delaney demanded as she rushed out of the turbolift and onto the bridge.

Heads turned, every one of them looking at her like she was suicidal. She had no business being here, after all.

"Captain Vasser is in her ready room," said Lieutenant Kuznetzov, in a voice cold enough to freeze the air between them. "But I would remind you, crewman, that-"

"Great, thanks."

Delaney grit her teeth as she interrupted and dashed past him. She really hoped she wasn't crazy because if not, she was seriously going to pay for that.

Before anyone could stop her, Delaney raced into the ready

room. Once she was inside and the door slid closed behind her, she found herself alone with Captain Vasser. The captain was sitting behind her desk and looked up at Delaney with an impossibly stern, displeased expression on her face.

“Crewman,” she said in a warning tone. “Just because I do not lock my door, does not mean you should presume to-“

“Forget that!” Delaney cut her off.

She paled slightly as she watched Captain Vasser’s eyebrow raise higher than she’d ever seen it. However, the captain seemed to sense her urgency, and gave her a chance to speak.

“Captain, I saw something,” Delaney began. “Just now, down in medbay. I...” She paused, wishing she’d spent more time thinking about exactly what to say. “It’s Wasp. She’s infiltrated the ship. And she’s doing something to people. I don’t know what, exactly. But she’s in their heads. She’s controlling them.”

Delaney paused to catch her breath. She half expected Captain Vasser to query something, or else yell at her for telling tall tales. Instead, the captain just stared at her with an odd, vacant look in her eyes. Delaney couldn’t tell what that meant, but it made her nervous.

“I swear, Captain,” she added quickly. “I really saw it. You have to believe me. We’re all in danger. That’s why I came running in here. I couldn’t tell anyone else, I couldn’t even use my communicator. We don’t know who else might be-“

Suddenly, Captain Vasser bolted to her feet. Delaney broke off mid-flow but then tried again. “Captain, please, I-“

“I believe you, Crewman Delaney,” Captain Vasser said, somewhat stiffly. Relief swept over Delaney. “And you did the right thing by bringing this directly to me. You must not tell anyone else.

Now follow me.”

She started walking at a brisk, purposeful pace, out of the ready room and toward the turbolift. Delaney moved quickly to follow her. In that moment, she could have kissed Captain Vasser she was so grateful to be believed. She wasn’t sure where the captain was taking her, but it was an immense relief to see that she seemed to have some kind of plan for contingencies like this. For once, Delaney was glad to have a hard-ass as a captain.

As they crossed the bridge, Delaney caught plenty of dirty, impressed, or downright incredulous looks. The officers must have been wondering why she wasn’t currently being chewed out for insubordination. Captain Vasser ran a tight ship, though, and as such, none of them dared to question her. They just busied themselves with their assigned tasks, and so Captain Vasser and Delaney made it into the lift without comment. From there, they headed down into the Inyx’s decks. Delaney didn’t think to ask where they were going until, after they left the turbolift and started walking again, she realized what they were heading for.

The holodeck.

“Uh, captain?” Delaney ventured as they stepped over the threshold. “What are we doing here?”

All too late, she was giving thought to how Captain Vasser had seemed during the walk down. She had been oddly quiet, and unnaturally serene. Delaney had assumed she was simply trying not to give the game away, but it was starting to seem like more than that. Captain Vasser was behaving more like a robot than a person. It was almost like she was-

“Computer, seal the holodeck,” Captain Vasser said. Her voice was chillingly monotonous. “My authorization. Hold all communications. Load up and engage scenario Wasp One.”

“Wasp...”

The penny dropped. Delaney turned back toward the door, only to see it slide closed and hear the heavy-duty mechanical locks slam into place. She was trapped. A beat later, the holodeck’s many, many highly sophisticated holographic projectors hummed to life. At her rank, Delaney didn’t get a lot of holo-rec time, but she was still familiar enough to brace herself for the walls and floor shifting and dissolving into a new scene. Instead, though, all that happened was that a single hologram appeared in the space between Delaney and Captain Vasser.

It was Wasp. She looked just as she had in medbay, complete with the bizarre, regal, latex costume that was such a strange match for her neon green hair and punk looks.

Now Delaney knew she wasn’t crazy. She just really really wished she was.

“Well, I guess this was always going to happen,” Wasp complained, throwing up her arms and looking straight at Delaney. “But you really picked your moment, you know that? Right as I was finishing up all the preparations.” She glanced at Captain Vasser and snickered. “Good thing your trusted captain knew exactly what to do. Or rather, good thing I programmed her with exactly what to do.”

“You...” Delaney paled. “What the fuck? What the fuck is going on?”

“Oh, well, allow me to fill you in!” Wasp bowed mockingly. “At least, as soon as I...”

She snapped her fingers, and her bizarre, latex getup phased out of existence, replaced with an outfit that was equally conspicuous, but far more in keeping with the hacker’s usual style.

“Basically, I’m in your ship’s computer,” Wasp explained. “I’m running the *Inyx*. All of it. The only thing around here I don’t control is the crew. At least, not yet. But I’m working on it. Turns out, if you know how, getting into a person’s head isn’t so much harder than getting into a computer.”

Delaney shook her head in disbelief as Wasp crowed. She reached up and slapped the communicator badge on her chest.

“Emergency channel,” she said urgently. “This is Crewman Delaney to the bridge. Delaney to the bridge. Do you read me?”

There was no response except the sound of Wasp’s laughter.

“See?” she mocked. “Believe me now?”

Delaney balled her hands into fists. She felt powerless, and it was pissing her off. She looked at Wasp. No point punching a hologram. She looked at Captain Vasser. She was clearly a puppet. She looked back at the door. Locked, and military-grade.

There was no way out.

Delaney didn’t understand. This didn’t seem possible. Up until half an hour ago, this had just been a normal day. She was struggling to make sense of it all.

“You... you have...” she said slowly. “Some kind of fucking... device? That you just put in people’s heads? And then you’re in control.”

“Uh-huh!” Wasp nodded happily. “I do now, at least. That delightful little science officer is figuring out the finishing touches.”

Delaney shook her head in futile disbelief. She'd never heard of technology like that, but there was no way to deny what she'd seen in medbay. Something was missing from Wasp's story, though.

"But then," Delaney asked slowly, "how did you get to this point? You... you got the captain under your control? But... how? There's no way any of this should have been possible without..."

She looked at Captain Vasser, willing her to somehow rouse herself from the strange, mesmerized stupor Wasp seemed to have her in. If there was anyone who could get her out of this mess, it was the captain. Delaney just needed to figure out exactly what was wrong with her.

"Oh, that's the best part." Wasp sauntered over to Captain Vasser and stroked her cheek, almost affectionately. "She was the key to all of this. I made it into the holodeck on my own, but all the rest? She gave it to me. Let me into all the critical systems. She was the very first piece of the puzzle. She couldn't help herself."

"N-no," Delaney breathed. If any part of this madness was truly unbelievable, it was that. Captain Vasser would never put her ship or her crew in jeopardy.

"Yes," Wasp insisted gleefully. "Your captain has a few skeletons in her closet. Or a few spirals, as the case may be. Captain Yvonne Vasser is a complete and total hypno-slut. A fetishist. And she broke her brain so hard, all I needed to do was pull a few strings and use a few of the right words."

"You're lying," Delaney hissed. It didn't make any sense. The captain was... no. No way. Wasp was just messing with her. That was the only explanation. What she was telling Delaney was completely impossible to square with everything she knew about Captain Vasser. "Fuck you!"

Wasp arched an eyebrow. "I'm really not. You should see the amount of porn she had buried in the ship's computers. Hell, you should see how messed up she got looking at some of it. Drooling, eyes blank, head drooping..."

"Go fuck yourself!" Delaney yelled angrily. "You're full of shit!"

It was strange. She was the last person she'd expect to defend Captain Vasser's honor. Maybe some of that deeply annoying basic training had sunk in somewhere along the way. Trust the ship, trust the captain. Maybe it was that in all the time Delaney had been serving on the *Inyx*, Captain Vasser and her sternness had simply always been there. You counted on it, the way you counted on the sun coming up each morning. Maybe it was just that she'd always assumed that when the going got tough, Captain Vasser would be there with a plan and a steady hand. Whatever it was, she couldn't just let Wasp run her mouth like this.

"Hmm." Wasp drew her face into a lopsided, daring smirk. She seemed to take Delaney's words as a challenge. "Well, why don't we see what the captain herself has to say about all that?"

She turned to Captain Vasser, still standing just where she had been when Wasp had first appeared, with a blank, dazed expression on her face. Wasp lifted her hand to the captain's face and snapped her fingers a few times.

"Captain? Earth to captain? It's time to wake up. Oh, and *that's an order*."

At those last words, Captain Vasser seemed to stir. Her pose became a little less stiff and she blinked her eyes a few times, and slowly they cleared of fog. It was like watching someone wake up - but slowly. Agonizingly slowly. Delaney couldn't begin to fathom how deeply Captain Vasser had been under, or for how long. What did that mean, for how she'd been commanding the ship all this

time?

“W-what...” Captain Vasser said in a desperately faint voice. “W-w-where... am I?”

“That’s it.” Wasp kept snapping her fingers impatiently. “Come on. All the way up.”

Her insistent snapping seemed to do more to disorient the captain than anything else, but eventually, Captain Vasser seemed to get her bearings. She looked around at the holodeck, and then at Delaney, and then at Wasp - and then she turned as white as a sheet.

“You...” Captain Vasser breathed, aghast. She looked down. “Oh. No, no, no...”

“Captain!”

She looked like she was about to fall over, and so Delaney rushed to her side, ready to support her. She couldn’t possibly fathom what was going on in the other woman’s head, but she knew what was at stake and she knew her duty in a situation like this: report to the captain, and be ready for orders.

“Captain Vasser,” Delaney said crisply as her captain peered blearily at her. “Wasp seems to be in control of the ship’s systems. We need to stop her. What should we do?”

Captain Vasser’s eyes widened. She started shaking her head. “That can’t be,” she said. “I didn’t... I wouldn’t...”

Delaney’s heart started to sink. What was happening? “Captain!” she said, louder. “Orders, captain?”

She just didn’t seem to be getting through to her. Captain Vasser

kept shaking her head and winced like she was recoiling, both from Delaney's question and from the sudden torrent of her own memories. "Crewman, wait, I... I need to think."

Delaney's face fell. Who was this woman? She was like a husk of the captain Delaney had known. Seeing her like this was unspeakably demoralizing, and it was enough to make Delaney wonder if Wasp had actually been telling the truth.

"Captain, she..." Delaney ventured slowly. "She said you let her into the critical systems. Something about... your, uh, holodeck material?"

It seemed to take Captain Vasser a moment to process Delaney's words, but once she did, she reacted in a way the younger woman never would have expected. Her nerve broke, and she looked away. Her face turned a deep scarlet with shame.

"T-that's not..." she stammered. "I didn't m-m... No, no, there must be something else. I couldn't... wouldn't..."

"Captain..." A sense of insurmountable disappointment washed over Delaney. She couldn't believe what she was hearing. Captain Vasser was making excuses. She sounded like she was in denial. Was this really the woman Delaney had chosen to put her faith in?

"O captain, my captain!" Wasp echoed mockingly, rounding on Captain Vasser. "Come on, cap! Tell her! Let's see... which scenario was it? You've so many, after all. The one with the student, at the academy? I think that was it."

"Shut up!" Captain Vasser barked, but her voice was too high-pitched. It lacked authority. And Delaney couldn't help but notice the other ways she was reacting. She was squeezing her legs together as if taken by a sharp yearning. "S-shut up."

“Or you’ll what?” Wasp cackled mercilessly. “Lick my boots again? Please! And you can’t tell me you wouldn’t enjoy it. We both know that’s a lie.”

“N-n-nooo,” Captain Vasser cried.

“I think maybe even your crewman does too,” Wasp added. “I checked her file, you know. Lori Delaney. A real troublemaker. But she came straight to you anyway. It’s almost touching, isn’t it? Such faith? What a shame that you’re just going to let her down.”

This time, Captain Vasser couldn’t seem to muster the strength even to deny it. She just let out a wordless whine that was half shame, half ecstasy. Delaney backed away uncertainly. What the hell was she watching? This felt, more than anything else, like some kind of twisted foreplay.

“But I suppose you’re enjoying that too, aren’t you?” Wasp went on. The way she posed and gestured theatrically, drawing out each word as she tormented the hapless captain out of sadistic glee, was infuriating to witness. “That’s one of your favorites. Getting humiliated in front of someone younger. Someone subordinate. Someone who should look up to you. If only she was hypnotizing you too, huh? I bet that would really get you off.”

“S-stop,” Captain Vasser begged. “P-please. I can’t... think...”

It was all too clear why. She was blushing like a maiden and sweating visibly, and the way her body twitched and contorted with each of Wasp’s loaded, venomous accusations was undeniably suggestive. Between shame and pleasure, pleasure was evidently winning out. This was a side of Captain Vasser that Delaney had never seen before, and it left her horrified and transfixed in equal measure.

“Can’t think? I thought you’d be begging for that.” Waps giggled,

and then made a little gesture with her hand and plucked a holographic pocket watch out of thin air. She dangled it by its chain and started swinging it back and forth like a pendulum in front of Captain Vasser. “Well, I think Crewman Delaney here has gotten the picture. What do you say, captain? Do you wanna go back into that nice, blissful, trancey sleep? You know what you have to do. Just look at the pocket watch, and let your mind go blank.”

As she swung the pocket watch, Wasp’s voice changed. It became soft and melodious, a luring song, beckoning Captain Vasser to calm and submission. To Delaney’s horror, it seemed to work. Slowly, Captain Vasser’s face turned towards the pendulum, and as soon as her eyes locked onto it they started to go dull. With each swing, more and more emotion and personality drained from her face, and she started to slip into a kind of stillness that was disrupted only by occasional, rapturous shivering that hinted at the blinding, fetishistic pleasure she was experiencing.

Seeing how pathetically susceptible the captain was made Delaney tremble. It was practically confirmation of Wasp’s story. But that wasn’t the worst part. The very worst part was the ghost of the last expression Delaney could see haunting Captain Vasser’s face.

It was relief. The captain was relieved at being hypnotized. At not having to think anymore. At not having to face what she’d done. Delaney’s hands balled into fists again. She couldn’t take any more of this farce.

“Hey!” she yelled, striding forward. “Snap the fuck out of it already!”

Delaney shoved Wasp’s hologram out of the way as roughly as she could, grabbed Captain Vasser by the shoulders, and slapped her across her face. Captain Vasser shuddered in the aftermath of the blow, slowly coming back to life.

“Wwuh... hhuh?” she said blearily. Delaney noted with disgust that she was actually drooling.

“Wake up already!” she demanded. “Captain - no, Yvonne Vasser. Wake the fuck up, Yvonne. You’re better than this! I know you are! You’re one of the youngest and finest captains in the whole damn Alliance, even if you are a total bitch. So, Yvonne, I don’t care what you did or what you’re into. I just need you to straighten up, get your head out of your ass, and figure out how we’re all going to get out of this mess!”

Delaney wasn’t one for pep talks, but she thought it was a pretty respectable attempt. She just hoped it got through to Captain Vasser properly. Even though Delaney had managed to rouse her from trance, she looked like she was back to barely knowing where she was or who she was talking to.

“C-crewman?” Captain Vasser slurred, glancing down at the red of Delaney’s uniform that indicated her rank. “Did you just... slap me?”

“Yeah.” Delaney had to smile at the absurdity of it. This was going to make for one hell of a story someday. “I guess I did.”

To her surprise, though, Captain Vasser didn’t seem to come any close to true, clear wakefulness. With all the coordination of a staggering drunk, she shoved Delaney back and looked at her with a farcical impression of sternness.

“T-that’s... not appropriate, c-crewman,” Captain Vasser said slowly. She seemed to be drawing on some kind of deeply embedded reflex that Delaney’s behavior had managed to dredge up. “N-nor is calling me... ‘Yvonne’. Alliance regulation... 521. Salute when addressing a s-superior officer.”

The smile slipped from Delaney’s face. In that moment, all her

faith was lost. They were in the clutches of an incredibly dangerous criminal, and Captain Vasser was so far gone that all she could think to do was to quote the regs and lecture Delaney about insubordination. Maybe she was too fucked up to think about their situation properly. Maybe she'd just chosen not to. It didn't make any difference now.

"God," Delaney spat, her expression twisted. "You really are broken, aren't you?"

"Told you so," piped up Wasp.

Delaney couldn't spare the emotion to be angry at Wasp. All her fury was reserved for Captain Vasser. The *Inyx* was her ship. They were her crew. She was responsible for all of them. How dare she let them down so badly? Especially after all those lectures and tough rules and disciplinary sentences. She was a fraud and a hypocrite, and whatever happened to the rest of the crew fell on her head.

So maybe all Delaney could do was rub her face in it while she still had her free will.

"Forget it," she snapped. "Fuck you and fuck all your rules and regs. This is what you want, right? This is what you're mad at me for interrupting?"

Delaney whipped around and snatched the hardlight pocket watch out of Wasp's hand. In imitation of the hacker, she dangled it in front of Captain Vasser and started to swing it by its chain.

"Go ahead," she snarled. "Get your fill, *captain*."

"I... I..."

Captain Vasser had been trying to say something, but as soon as

she saw the pocket watch the words died on her lips. Delaney saw her eyes begin to glaze over once more. Making that happen flooded her body with a strange kind of satisfaction.

“Wow,” Delaney laughed. “You really can’t help yourself, can you? Don’t you get it? I’m mocking you, *captain*. Aren’t I being insubordinate now? Don’t you care? Can you even hear me?”

Delaney knew almost nothing about hypnosis. As little as the average overly-curious young gridnet user, anyway. She wasn’t exactly vanilla herself. Still, she’d never tried anything like this. She could tell that her technique was sloppy. She couldn’t seem to get the watch to swing in a nice, slow, regular rhythm the way Wasp had. But whatever she was doing seemed to be more than enough for Captain Vasser.

“I guess that’s part of it, huh?” Delaney ranted, thinking back to Wasp’s words. “You like knowing that I’m just a crewman on your ship. You get off on it. I can tell. Is this one of your precious little holodeck fantasies, huh?”

A weak, wet mewl from Captain Vasser’s lips let Delaney know she’d hit somewhere near the mark. She smirked. Now that she’d given up all her faith in the captain, she was free to revel in the satisfaction. She thought back to all the times Vasser or one of her officers had written Delaney up for lateness, or uniform violations, or anything else.

“Fine, then. Far be it from me to stop you getting your kicks. I’ll just have to try and enjoy this even more.” Delaney grinned with wild abandon. “Think about it, captain. Think about how easy you are. All it takes is waving some stupid watch in front of you, and any petty crewman on this ship can have you drooling all over yourself. It’s pathetic.”

The broken captain’s mewls and moans grew louder; more

desperate.

“I hope everyone gets to see you like this.” Delaney was warming to her theme. “The whole crew. All those people who look up to you. I hope they all get their turn to stick their fingers in your head, just like I am right now.”

It was fascinating, watching Captain Vasser steadily slip under hypnosis even as her body burned and twitched from Delaney’s taunts. Delaney was starting to understand the appeal of the captain’s fetish - at least, from this angle.

“Bet you’d get a kick out of that, huh?” she went on. “From wondering what we’d all use you for. That’s what you want, right? You just want everyone to have their way with you. The more depraved, the better. What kind of captain wants something like that, huh? Along with how you’ve betrayed us all, you can hardly claim to deserve the captain’s chair.”

That brought forth a particularly anguished moan - but still, it was thick with pleasure. Delaney sensed that nothing was beyond the reach of the captain’s fetish. It was buried that deep in her soul. The more she treasured something, the more she wanted something, the more she felt ashamed of something, the better fuel it made for her kinks. And now Delaney was caught up in that feeling and that flow, eager to see how far she could push her.

“I think you’d be better suited for something a little different.” Delaney laughed darkly to herself. “You know that old joke about senior crew who sleep around? I bet you do. ‘Stress relief officers’. I think that’s a better fit. Don’t you? Maybe that’s what I’ll call you.”

Delaney laughed all the louder as she watched Captain Vasser’s face contort, as a spike of arousal drove its way through the captain’s body. Clearly, she’d hit on yet another fantasy.

“After all, who needs a holodeck for that kind of thing, when you have a ‘captain’ who’s just as easy to program.” Delaney snorted in amusement, making sure to keep the watch swinging in her hand. “I’m sure you’d love being turned into everyone’s fantasy. We’d just need to get you a fitting uniform.”

“It’s funny you should say that,” Wasp said. She had been standing off to one side so quietly, Delaney had almost forgotten she was there. Almost. “The captain herself came up with something that fits the bill. She never got around to trying it out, though. She was probably still working up the courage when I got to her.”

Wasp gave her fingers another snap as she instructed the holodeck’s computer to spring into action. At that very instant, Captain Vasser’s clothes warped and shifted. It was just a complex illusion, of course, but it was an effective one, and Delaney let out a gasp at what she was now wearing.

It was a blatant, gleeful mockery of her usual attire. An Alliance uniform - a captain’s uniform, no less - but so thinly made and so tightly cut it concealed almost nothing. It featured a plunging neckline and multiple sets of cut-outs all over Captain Vasser’s body, exposing all the parts of her body a captain’s crew weren’t supposed to think about. All in all, it was like something out of cheap pornography. A slutty Halloween costume take on an Alliance captain.

Perfect.

Delaney took a moment to admire Captain Vasser’s body. It made her feel superior. She’d never imagined she’d get to see the captain so thoroughly degraded, and there was something oddly tantalizing about the way Captain Vasser barely reacted to the humiliation. Delaney’s pocket watch still held her mind in its grip. She was like a puppet - and thinking about that gave Delaney yet another idea.

“Hey, officer!” she barked, in her best imitation of Captain Vasser’s usual, commanding demeanor. “What are you waiting for? Give me a salute.”

Her order seemed to take a long moment to penetrate the deep layers of fog enshrouding Captain Vasser’s mind, but once they did, the captain slowly raised her arm, bent it at an angle, and brought her hand to her temple in a vaguely passable military salute.

But Delaney wasn’t going to be satisfied with ‘vaguely passable’. No more than Captain Vasser ever was.

“C’mon, officer,” she jeered. “You can do better than that! Straighten your back! Hold your head up high! Stiffen that arm!”

With the pocket watch still swinging Captain Vasser could not disobey, but she was in no state to salute properly either. Delaney was treated to the spectacle of the hopelessly brainwashed woman trying desperately to pull herself together, straining to achieve enough focus to keep her back straight while she raised her arm. The result was still sloppy, just as Delaney’s salutes often were in the early morning. The comparison amused Delaney, but of course, the very best part was how utterly and unmistakably absurd Captain Vasser looked, saluting while wearing that porn-parody outfit.

Delaney just laughed.

“Nice work, officer,” she mocked. She was enjoying this little roleplay. “At ease.”

Captain Vasser slumped. She seemed grateful to be allowed to slip back into complete oblivion.

“I have an idea,” Wasp interjected. “If you want to see what really gets her off.”

Delaney sensed Wasp was offering, not telling. She nodded. Wasp had successfully aroused her curiosity. The hacker snapped her fingers again, and this time it wasn't Captain Vasser's clothes that changed. It was Delaney's. Her uniform shoes disappeared beneath a hardlight hologram of a pair of thigh-high platform-heeled boots. The heels were easily more than six inches high, and the boots were polished all over to a mirror sheen. Delaney threw an irritated look at Wasp as she stumbled briefly from being raised up on her new, holographic heels, but she quickly found her balance.

"Trust me," Wasp assured me. "This is one of her favs. If you want to really see her at her lowest, this is the best way to do it."

Delaney really, really did. Seeing how far Captain Vasser could fall was addictive. She noticed that Wasp had also conjured up a small stool right behind her, so she perched on it and stretched out one of her new boots towards Captain Vasser.

"Kneel, officer," she instructed.

She threw the pocket watch back to Wasp, who caught it. Delaney could sense it was no longer needed. Sure enough, Captain Vasser barely stirred, and her eyes soon settled on Delaney's boots. She seemed to lose herself in the reflections that formed on their shiny surfaces, and sank slowly to her knees in front of the crewman.

"Officer," Wasp sang out. "The crewman's boots are looking a little dirty. Why don't you show her how you like to polish them?"

It wasn't true, not even slightly, but Captain Vasser nonetheless sprung into life with something approaching eagerness. She bent forward, placed her lips against the chunky tip of the boot heel, and began to worship. The brainwashed captain started planting slow, reverent kisses on the hardlight material, before moving on to drawing her tongue across the heel in long, slow strokes. Finally,

shivering with pleasure, she took the heel into her mouth and started sucking on it, taking it so deep she almost choked.

Delaney was completely mesmerized by the sight.

“God,” she breathed. “You weren’t kidding. She loves this.”

Wasp just giggled. It was obvious. Nobody had needed to order Captain Vasser to put this much exultant devotion into polishing Delaney’s boots. Beneath the deep fog of trance, it was obvious just how much the captain was enjoying this. Her cheeks were stained red with shameful pleasure, and one of her hands was drifting down to between her legs.

“No,” Delaney said sharply, once she noticed Captain Vasser about to touch herself. “I haven’t given you permission, officer. Use this instead.”

She stretched her other leg forward and used the tip of the other boot to pry Captain Vasser’s legs apart before pressing it insistently against the front of her pants. Immediately, Captain Vasser’s low, muffled moans doubled in volume and desperation, and her hips started to buck and thrust. Delaney found herself grinning.

“See?” she purred. “This is the real you, captain. This is where you belong. Isn’t it?”

Captain Vasser was beyond anything but nodding in delirious agreement. She was still eagerly kissing and sucking Delaney’s boot, but the pleasure she was receiving sapped her coordination. Her worship became sloppy and, as she moved from the heel of the boot to the tip, she was leaving long, wet trails of drool all over the object of her adoration and down the sides of her own face.

She looked nothing like herself. Nothing like the stern, dignified starship captain Delaney was so used to. Delaney was struck by the

sheer magnitude of the difference. She had never once seen Captain Vasser express even the slightest hint of pleasure, amusement, or passion. Delaney had taken to assuming she was every bit as joyless in private. Clearly not, if this was how she'd been spending her holo-rec time.

It made Delaney wonder. Where did her heart really lie?

"You know," Delaney said, steadily grinding the tip of the boot against Captain Vasser. "I heard a rumor that you'd been spending a whole lot more time on the holodeck lately. Finally dipping into that holo-rec time you've been accumulating all these months. And I guess now I know why. I'm sure Wasp told you to, but I'm also sure you loved every minute of it."

Captain Vasser shivered at the coming humiliation.

"All this time," Delaney continued, "while your crew was steadily being brainwashed. While your ship was being taken over. You were spending every spare minute down here, fucking yourself stupid to whatever perverse little fantasies Wasp found in your holodeck files? Is that right? Answer me."

"Y-y-yes," Captain Vasser moaned around the boot in her mouth. Her voice sounded distant, but there was a high, needy edge to it.

"All when we needed you most." Delaney just loved the way Captain Vasser twitched as she twisted the knife. "Or do you get off on that too, huh? On betraying us? On becoming the way we get brainwashed too? Answer me?"

"Y-yes!" Captain Vasser cried. Her voice was even more strained this time. She was obviously close to climax.

"Of course." Delaney laughed. She leaned in close. There was something she wanted to hear straight from the captain's lips. "So

tell me. Between captaining the ship - between being the perfect, textbook, strict, admired, respected captain - and becoming nothing more than a porn star in your own fucked-up fantasies: which one feels better? That? Your old life? Or this?"

"T-t-this!"

The answer erupted from Captain Vasser's lips without hesitation. It was anguished, but Delaney knew by now that Captain Vasser derived as much pleasure from the anguish as she did pain. And she didn't doubt for a moment that what Captain Vasser said was true. She could already see it. The captain was exploring her deepest desires; urges and fantasies that had been fermenting within her for years. Compared to that, the pride and prestige of the captain's chair was as fragile as an eggshell.

That Captain Vasser was already gone. She'd dulled and rusted down here in the holodeck, pleasuring herself at Wasp's command. Now, she was just a hypno-slut.

"Good." Delaney sneered, leaning in to better enjoy the moment. "Now cum."

Captain Vasser obeyed. It was like she'd been struck by lightning. She twitched madly, drooling more than ever and flailing in increasingly desperate efforts to rub her cunt against the tip of Delaney's boot. The other boot, meanwhile, was still in her mouth, and she was still kissing and lapping fervently.

She hadn't been given permission to stop, after all.

Eventually, all the strength left her, and she went limp. Captain Vasser slumped to the ground and finally released Delaney's boot. It had been as shiny as a mirror; now, it was utterly soiled with the wet, slavering proof of the captain's attention. It was as ruined as she was.

“Wow,” Delaney breathed. She felt almost as aroused as Captain Vasser looked. “I’m gonna enjoy using you, captain.”

Wasp stepped forward, coughing. “You know I’m going to brainwash you too, right? My sweet little pet nerds just finished whipping up a new prototype.”

Delaney noticed she was suddenly holding something long, thin and metal. It looked like a medical instrument.

“I know,” she said. “I don’t care. I just want you to promise me one thing.”

“You’re not really in the position to be making demands,” Wasp remarked. “But I’m feeling indulgent. Go ahead.”

Delaney stared straight down at Captain Vasser. “Just promise me that, in whatever fucked-up pecking order you come up with for this ship, I’ll be above her.”

Wasp threw back her head and laughed. “Oh, don’t worry about that one bit. You’ll get your wish. Pinky swear.”

“Good.” Delaney nodded. “Go ahead.”

She kept her eyes firmly fixed on the captain she’d always resented as Wasp held the medical tool up against her ear and injected something cold and strange into her skull. Captain Yvonne Vasser’s hypnotized, blissed-out face was the last thing Delaney saw before everything turned into spirals.

CHAPTER SIX

Wasp - or rather, her hardlight hologram - was bending over one of medbay's examination chairs and staring very, very intently at the woman lying in it.

"Wow," the hacker remarked, eyes shining. "Engineer Sai Kabir. She's pretty hot. Cuter than her pic in the personnel files. Definitely a good choice, given what she's hiding - under here." Wasp poked the engineer in the chest. "And up here." She moved her hand to Sai's head. "Doc, how's she coming along?"

Dr. Hiraga was standing just a short distance away. She was dressed in her usual uniform, but the unnaturally stiff, still way she held herself made her seem more like a mannequin than a person.

"Subject Sai Kabir's responses are well within expected parameters," Dr. Hiraga replied. Her voice was completely empty of any emotion - a far cry from her usual, friendly bedside manner. "Neurological readings indicate that her thought patterns are about seventy percent subjugated at present. There are no predicted obstacles to successful indoctrination."

"Seventy percent, huh?" Wasp mused. "That's a good number. A fun number."

"Engineer Kabir is the fourth subject today," Dr. Hiraga continued. "As per Stress Relief Officer Vasser's protocols, we are proceeding with extreme caution to minimize the risk of alerting

the rest of the cr-

“Yeah, I don’t care right now,” Wasp interrupted. She sighed at her brainwashed puppet as the doctor fell silent. “I thought I was making Vasser more fun! Here’s what the new stress relief officer doesn’t quite understand yet: extreme caution is so *boring*. We’re... what? A quarter done? A third? It’s taking forever! I want to have fun - and this girl is the ticket.”

Under normal circumstances, Sai Kabir would never have tolerated anybody speaking about her or her captain that way. The engineer was a serious, career-minded woman - young, but she had hopes of climbing the rungs quickly. That meant she was determined to do her part in stopping Wasp and bringing the hacker to justice. But these weren’t normal circumstances.

A little earlier that day, Sai had reported to medbay for what was, she’d been told, a routine medical procedure. An inoculation of some kind. With no reason to be suspicious, she’d arrived exactly when scheduled and had helpfully allowed Dr. Hiraga to strap her into the examination chair so that she could inject something into her ear.

After that, everything had been spirals. They had flickered to life behind Sai’s eyes, so bright and disorienting they left no room for other thoughts. Then, whispers; new patterns of thought and feeling, written directly into her mind by what she was seeing. Trigger words. New beliefs. New responses. Bit by bit, over the span of little more than an hour, Sai Kabir was being completely and totally brainwashed.

She hadn’t resisted. She hadn’t been able to. She hadn’t even realized what was happening until it was far, far too late.

Wasp knelt down to the level of her face and started talking to her, even though she knew perfectly well Sai couldn’t hear her. “You

know, I never did like playing with dolls. They don't react. It's no fun. Much more fun making the other kids cry. My own personal Alliance warship is way, way too good of a toy to pass up on, but frankly I was enjoying myself more when there was a little pushback. A little resistance."

Sai Kabir's head slumped slightly to one side. A thin trickle of drool was running down from one of the corners of her mouth. Her eyes were huge, vacant orbs, lit from behind by the shimmering, holographic spiral that was reflecting on their insides. She comprehended nothing at all of what Wasp was telling her.

"And you? Well, I was digging around, and I found a few fun little programs buried in your holodeck files. Turns out that everyone around here uses that thing to work out their little kinks. So I figured: why not take you out to play before you're completely zonked? Call it a stress test, or something." Wasp stretched forward and hungrily kissed the side of Sai's face, then giggled. "Anyway, consider yourself lucky! Maybe you'll be the little mouse that manages to wriggle free." She glanced at Dr. Hiraga. "Shut her implant off."

The doctor obeyed; she tapped a few times on the dataslate in her hand, and the unnatural light in Sai's eyes disappeared.

"Wakey wakey!" Wasp sang out. "Lots to do, engineer."

Full consciousness came to Sai Kabir agonizingly slowly. It was like struggling to wake up from the worst nap imaginable. Her thoughts were treacle, and after so long being forced open, her eyelids were impossibly heavy. Paralysis held her in its grip; even after she had regained some semblance of independent thought, it took what felt like an eternity for her to be able to lift her hands and rub the sleep from her eyes. Reconstructing what had brought her to the examination chair took even longer. All of Sai's memories felt like nothing more than figments of dreams, and most of them were

warped beyond recognition.

Then, eventually, the medbay around her came back into focus - and she saw Wasp.

That was the shot of adrenaline Sai needed. She'd have recognized the hacker anywhere, with her neon hair, scruffy clothes, and wild, malevolent eyes. Recognition brought with it alarm. She could sense that Wasp's presence here meant something was very, very wrong. Sai gathered all her strength and, with all the coordination of a staggering drunk, managed to somehow force herself to her feet.

"Dr. Hiraga?" Sai croaked; her throat was painfully dry. "Why is this-" She broke off after looking at the doctor. It was immediately obvious she wasn't going to be of any help. Sai slammed her palm on her comm badge. "Engineer Sai Kabir to-" She broke off again. No chirrup of acknowledgment. Her badge wasn't working. "Fuck," she muttered to herself. "G-gotta get to the bridge."

Sai lifted one foot to take a step toward the door and almost fell over. The room around her was still spinning.

"Woah, careful!" Wasp laughed, reaching out to help steady her. "Why such a hurry, engineer?"

Sai pulled away from her sharply, even though it threatened to make her topple. After throwing Wasp a fierce glare, she fixed her eyes on the door. "Gotta warn the captain," she muttered to herself through gritted teeth. The words helped her find some clarity amidst the awful fog filling her head.

"Warn the captain?" Wasp reached out and grabbed Sai's chin, forcing the engineer to look at her. "But I *am* the captain, silly. I'm your new captain."

“No, you are fucking n-“ Sai froze mid-sentence. As she looked at Wasp, something was coming back to her. A memory, deeply buried, now being dredged out of the abyss.

Wasp was her new captain.

It didn't seem possible. It made no sense. But somehow, Sai couldn't bring herself to doubt it either. Wasp was her new captain. She just was, and Sai just knew. That certain conviction sat uncomfortably alongside the fast-fading sense of alarm and urgency she'd been experiencing just heartbeats before. With the adrenaline draining from her bloodstream, she was left staring at Wasp in hopeless confusion.

“You're... my new captain?”

“That's right,” Wasp replied, a huge, shit-eating grin on her face. “The order just came through from headquarters. I'm the new captain.”

“You're... the new captain,” Sai repeated, tasting this new truth in her mouth. The absurdity of remembering something that she was now being told had just happened was lost on her. The truth was settling in her head, but it brought with it a barrage of contradictions. “But... you're our enemy.”

“Not anymore,” Wasp told her.

“Oh.” Sai nodded slowly. Wasp wasn't their enemy anymore. That made things simpler. “OK. What about Captain Vasser?”

Wasp giggled. “Oh, don't worry about her.”

“Right.” Sai nodded again. She didn't have to worry about her. This was starting to make more sense. Or at least, she couldn't seem

to figure out why it didn't.

"Hm?" Wasp pursed her lips disapprovingly, although the glee never left her eyes. "Engineer, is that how you address your captain?"

Sai's breath caught. "No, sir!" Even though she was still struggling to pull herself together, she managed to bring her feet together, straighten her back, and salute. "Sorry, captain."

Wasp just giggled in sheer delight. That struck Sai as a strange way for a commanding officer to conduct herself - but it really wasn't her place to question.

"Glad we're on the same page," Wasp said, after a moment. "I could get used to this. Anyway! Take off your shirt."

Sai did a double take. "C-captain?"

"You heard me," Wasp insisted. "Take off your shirt."

Two patches of deep red appeared on Sai's brown cheeks. "Yes, captain."

She reached down and lifted her uniform shirt off over her head. Beneath, she was wearing something that, while not at all against regulations, was likely to raise a few eyebrows. Wrapped around Sai's chest several times was a length of white linen, fastened so tight it was evidently compressing her natural form into a sleeker, less pronounced shape.

The engineer was binding her breasts.

Sai was practically squirming as Wasp ogled her chest. She preferred that people didn't know, and she *strongly* preferred her breasts not being the object of attention or interest. But there was no

helping it. Wasp was her captain.

“Now take that off too,” Wasp ordered, pointing.

At that, Sai stiffened visibly. “Captain, that’s... I don’t think...”

“Engineer?” Wasp affected shock. “I gave you an order.”

“That’s...” Sai twitched. Disobeying made her uncomfortable, but not as uncomfortable as what Wasp was suggesting. “I can’t do that, sir.”

Wasp snorted. “Wow. I didn’t figure you for insubordination. You really do have a complex about this.”

Sai blushed even deeper. “I-It’s not insubordination! Captain, Alliance regulations clearly impose several limits on the orders starship captains can issue - violating basic bodily dignity being one of them. I believe you’re crossing that line.”

“You do, huh?” Wasp’s grin returned. “I guess you’re right about that. But I think you might have forgotten something, engineer: those limits don’t apply if I say ‘Captain says’. Then, it’s an order you absolutely have to follow.”

“They... don’t?” Sai said uncertainly. That didn’t sound right to her. Not at all. But she hardly had the regulations memorized. If anyone would know better than her, it was the captain.

“No,” Wasp giggled at her own improvisation. “They don’t.”

“R-right.” Sai was starting to remember now. It had just taken a moment, like how it had taken her a moment to remember that Wasp was the captain now. “But you didn’t say-“

“Captain says: take that off,” Wasp interrupted, pointing at Sai’s chest.

Sai shuddered in horror. That was the last thing she’d wanted to hear. She would have taken any alternative - but there was no choice. She couldn’t possibly disobey an order like that.

“Y... yes, sir.”

With utmost reluctance, Sai reached behind herself and untucked the ends of her binding cloth. Immediately, the whole thing unraveled and started to slip down her body, and her chest sprung free - exposing the very reason for her breast-binding.

Sai’s chest was absolutely huge.

Wasp made no attempt whatsoever to hide her lurid enjoyment as she ogled Sai’s bare chest. The more she looked, the redder the engineer became, but it was soon clear that Wasp had more in mind than just staring.

“OK,” the hacker said, “you can put your shirt back on.”

Sai nodded gratefully, and rushed to start gathering up her binding cloth - until Wasp stopped her.

“No, no”, she chided. “Captain says: you can *only* put your shirt back on.”

Sai shuddered again, but obeyed. Putting her shirt back on proved to be both a blessing and a curse. On the one hand, having anything at all to cover herself was a relief. On the other hand, she’d made sure her uniform was sized to fit properly over her binder, not without it. Now that her binding cloth was strewn uselessly across the ground, her shirt was woefully inadequate to contain her chest.

Sai had to struggle and strain to get it on, and once she did, the shirt was stretched to its absolute limits. It looked like it might pop a button at any moment. Somehow, the way her shirt fit without her binding cloth made her chest look even bigger than it had when she wasn't wearing it.

Sai's face was burning hot. She wanted the ground to open up and swallow her.

"Perfect," Wasp mocked. "Alright. Time for your mission. I'm sending you to the ship's canteen. But first, take this."

She gestured to Dr. Hiraga, who then offered Sai an earpiece communicator. The engineer took the small, transparent device and nested it into her ear. Her badge didn't seem to be working right now anyway. Earpieces were sometimes used as a replacement for faulty badges, although their main purpose was discretion. If Wasp talked to her using this, nobody else would be able to hear.

"Great!" Wasp said. "Now get going, engineer."

Sai saluted again, but then frowned. "What... am I actually doing, captain? What's the mission?"

"Oh, don't worry about that." Wasp waved a dismissive hand. "I'll update you on the way. It's urgent, you see. Very important. Now hop to it."

"Yes, sir!"

If it was that important, Sai knew there was no time for more questions. This could be a chance to distinguish herself. She turned to leave medbay and - after one last uncomfortable glance down at her chest - stepped out into the corridor.



Puberty had been, by far, the worst time in Sai Kabir's life - and it was all thanks to her chest. She'd been told dozens of times, by dozens of other girls, that they were jealous of her amazing growth spurts. There was absolutely nothing to be jealous of. Over the course of her teenage years, Sai's breasts had grown to become almost cartoonishly large. They had no precedent in her family, and totally dwarfed the rest of her figure.

And as far as most people seemed to be concerned, they dwarfed her personality, too.

Her chest was all anyone else ever seemed to notice. It was all they looked at - no, all they stared at. Had they thought she couldn't tell? Sai could always tell, and it was always utterly humiliating. And they made the most crass assumptions about her, ignoring all her seriousness, all her intelligence, all her effort. It was maddening. Objectification like that was supposed to be a thing of the 20th century, but it had plagued Sai everywhere she'd went. There was nothing she could do except change what other people saw.

Binding had been an easy choice. Not a comfortable one - keeping that length of cloth wrapped so tightly around her chest all day was desperately unpleasant. But it worked. With her chest bound, she'd been taken seriously again. She'd distinguished herself as a smart, professional, career-minded engineer, and won a posting on the *Inyx*, one of the most prestigious ships in the Alliance. She even enjoyed the respect of the hard-headed chief engineer, an older woman she was quietly enjoying having a crush on.

It was everything she'd ever wanted, and everything her ridiculous chest had stood in the way of. The only reason she hadn't had surgery was because a medical incapacitation like that would have risked putting her ambitions on hold. As she'd begun her starship engineering career, Sai had felt sure of one thing above all

else: she hated her chest, and she never wanted anyone else to see how big it truly was.

Then the fantasies had started.

Fantasies of being exposed. Fantasies of being stared at. Fantasies of all the people who knew her only as a serious professional suddenly seeing just what her body was really like. At first they'd just crept in, but soon they were all-consuming. Now, it was all Sai could get off to. Whenever she got worked up, she just couldn't get her exhibitionist fantasies out of her head.

And fuck, she was so ashamed of it.

Sai was keenly, painfully aware of what anyone would say if they knew what was going on in her head. She didn't want to deal with any of that Freudian psychobabble. She just wanted those fantasies gone - but that was easier said than done. Once Sai had realized how bad it was getting, she'd tried ignoring them. It hadn't worked. The more she let herself get pent up, the worse it was. So, she'd tried indulging instead, hoping that whatever sick part of her brain was obsessed with her own tits would eventually get bored of the idea. She'd even made custom holodeck scenarios to try and get it out of her system.

That hadn't worked. That *really* hadn't worked. Getting a little taste of what it might feel like to walk through the *Inyx's* decks with her tits on display had lit a fire within Sai like nothing else. She wasn't a virgin, but sex paled compared to that feeling. It just couldn't satisfy her the same way.

Actually living it turned out to be a hundred times more intense.

As Sai rushed through the bowels of the *Inyx*, her face was so hot she could feel her skin scorching the air. She tried to keep her mind on the mission, but that was impossible. More than anything else,

she was hyper-conscious of her own chest. She knew exactly how she looked. There was no way she could ignore it. Fuck, she could see her chest bouncing with every step she took.

She wasn't wearing her binder.

Her uniform barely fit her chest.

And everyone could see.

The first time she'd turned a corner and found someone else walking towards her, Sai had almost moaned. They'd stared, of course. Who wouldn't? She looked obscene. Their eyes had felt like twin lasers on her body, scouring her with impossible heat and treasonous shocks of pleasure. Sai tried to tell herself that she wasn't really enjoying this. That she was an Alliance engineer on a mission, and that was all.

She knew it was a lie. As deeply, painfully ashamed as she was, it also felt incredible.

Sai was fighting to maintain her dignity and resist the siren allure of her fetish. But she was losing.

It didn't get any easier. A ship like the *Inyx* was never truly quiet. There were always people coming and going, and each one made the delicious, sinful pleasure in her body redouble.

They all stared. Every single one.

Sai couldn't help imagining what they might be thinking. No, worse than imagining. Fantasizing. The ones she didn't know barely even glanced at her face, and that was a kind of mercy. Maybe they wouldn't recognize her after this. They'd be left wondering about the mysterious crewman showing off her incredible body on deck

seventeen. But it was humiliating, too, in a way that stroked all of Sai's darkest dreams.

It was like she was nothing but a pair of tits to them.

But it was infinitely worse with people she did know. There were three or four of those; each time, they'd glance up at her face, just for a fraction of a second, and then do a kind of double-take. In that tiny moment, Sai could sense their mental image of her being completely rewritten. She could feel their shock. Their judgment. Their lust. She could hear the whispered conversations they'd have later, with others, about just how big her chest was. In Sai's mind's eye, the rewriting was permanent. They'd never look at her quite the same way again.

Fuck. Why did that turn her on so much?

After far, far too long, she reached the turbolifts. Sai could have wept with relief as the door opened and she threw herself inside, finally free from the burning eyes of her comrades.

A moment after she touched the button for the canteen deck, she realized she wasn't alone.

There was someone else there with her. A petty crewman, from the look of her uniform. Conscious of Sai's superior rank, she was doing everything she could to remain calm, composed, and respectful.

Unsuccessfully. Sai could see her glancing down at Sai's chest out of the corner of her eye. It was driving her crazy. Fuck. She could feel herself soaking through her underwear.

Sai, came Wasp's voice over the earpiece. *You read me?*

“Yes, captain,” Sai subvocalized, as she reached up to touch the device.

Great. Sai could practically hear the hacker licking her lips. I can see there's someone else there with you, in the lift. Flash her.

For a moment, Sai saw white, Then she caught sight of her reflection in the lift's metal walls and noticed she was turning a deeper shade of red than she'd ever seen on someone. “N-no!” she gasped, just barely keeping her voice hushed.

Oh, c'mon, Wasp drawled. It's an order.

“I'm n-not doing that,” Sai shot back. “That's ridiculous!”

Fuck. Why did part of her want to? Why couldn't she stop thinking about how it would be just like one of her fantasies?

Ugh, Wasp groaned. That's right, I gotta... what was that stupid phrase? Oh, yeah. Captain says: flash her.

Sai's breath caught in her throat. She couldn't refuse an order like that. She had to - even though it could destroy everything she'd worked so hard to build. Her dignity. Her reputation. Flashing a subordinate officer was... the sheer inappropriateness of it was staggering.

It didn't matter. Sai's body moved before her mind had come to terms with it. She turned to the petty crewman standing next to her, reached down, and lifted the hem of her shirt.

The next few moments seemed to play out in slow motion. Every last detail was etched permanently into Sai's mind for her to obsess over forever. Her movement caught the petty crewman's eye and she turned, inhaling a sharp breath as she realized what Sai was

doing. As Sai lifted her top, her eyes widened little by little in sheer disbelief, and she started to shake her head to politely decline whatever she was about to be involved in.

Then Sai's tits spilled free from the bottom of her shirt, and bounced as they came to rest on her chest.

Both of them froze. The petty crewman was nakedly staring now. Her mouth was open. She was transfixed. Sai was too. There was something in the air between them. A shared energy. A shared complicity. Sai could sense the gears turning in the other woman's head: surprise, shock, worry, curiosity.

And lust.

Oh, yes. The petty crewman was enjoying looking at Sai's tits. Sai could tell.

Sai moaned.

Nothing had prepared her for just how good it would feel. Sai was so light-headed she could barely see. Her legs were trembling. She thought she might pass out from the sheer, transcendent eroticism of the moment, but pleasure kept her fiercely grounded in her own body. The air on her skin. The way her nipples were hardening. The throbbing between her legs. The petty crewman's burning gaze. All of it made it impossible to slip away into unconsciousness or denial.

This was real. This was really happening.

The desperate need to try and escape was part of what made it bite so hard. Shame burned within Sai every bit as hot and fierce as pleasure. The moment was unbearable, but it just kept dragging on. Thoughts of disaster, of the consequences of anyone finding out about this, kept stinging at Sai, but somehow they only added to the delirious high she was feeling.

She couldn't be doing this. But she was.

And most of all, what made the hot licks of pleasure truly hit home was seeing herself from the other woman's perspective. Sai could just imagine what she must look like. It wasn't like she could pass this off as an accident, and her sweaty, flushed face made it all too clear that she was getting off on it.

She looked like a slut. An exhibitionist slut flaunting her tits. Nothing more.

The turbolift shuddered to a halt. The door opened. Sai became suddenly, keenly aware that it had only been seconds since she'd lifted her shirt.

The petty crewman opened her mouth. "W-what's your-"

Sai bolted.

Her heart in her mouth, she sprinted out of the turbolift door. Nervous energy let her move faster than she ever had before, and in no more than a second she made it around a corner and out of sight. Mercifully, nobody else was around. Sai slumped against the nearest wall, frantically smoothed her shirt back down, and fought to get her breathing under control.

What the fuck had just happened to her?

Not Wasp's order. That was one thing. As an engineer, it was hardly Sai's place to question the captain when she made it clear just how important her orders were. But why had Sai enjoyed it so much? Yes, she had fantasies - but fantasy was one thing. This was real life, and she should have been terrified of the damage she might have just done to her career and reputation.

Instead, she was burning up with arousal.

Was this really the kind of person Sai was? The kind she was becoming? A woman who cared more about getting off than about everything she'd spent years working to build? Sai felt like she was losing her balance, like she was slipping, and she was keenly aware of the fact that she didn't know where her rock bottom might be.

But still, she couldn't keep the wild, horny grin from her face.

Engineer? Wasp said languidly in her ear. *You have a mission, remember.*

"Yes, captain!"

Sai forced herself to focus. Wasp was right. She had orders. She needed to make it to the canteen, even if she still had no idea why. At least she'd made it to the right deck. Sai straightened up, took a moment to compose herself, and started walking.

The gentle mercy of being unobserved didn't last long. The canteen was always busy and the closer Sai got, the more she inevitably crossed paths with other members of the crew who were coming and going from their regular meals. As soon as they saw her, it started again: that burning, itching sensation of gazes upon her chest, each pair of eyes like white-hot candles that filled Sai's head with both fantasies and shame. After what had happened in the turbolift, just being stared at almost brought her to her knees.

Sai tried to ignore it. What else could she do but desperately try to pretend that each and every person she came across didn't end up staring at her tits?

She braced herself for the worst before she stepped into the canteen itself, but a miracle happened: nobody looked at her. Sai was

finally able to breathe a true sigh of relief. It made sense. The canteen was busy - so busy, no one person could stand out. Everyone there was hungry and in a hurry, and their eyes were fixed firmly on their meal trays. Sai was able to blend into the crowd.

Finally, Sai felt herself able to calm down.

“What now, captain?” she asked, touching her earpiece. She was keen to get this mission over with so that she could get a little private time.

Wasp’s voice, full of gleeful malice, soon robbed her of her newfound composure.

Captain says: lift your top and give all these nice people a show, Wasp giggled. For... let’s say, thirty seconds.

Sai saw white.

“W-what?” she asked desperately, even though her hands were already moving.

Oh, you heard me.

“B-but...” Even as she started to lift the hem of her shirt, Sai was looking for a way out. But she couldn’t disobey. Not an order like that. “This mission... c-can’t someone else...”

No way! Wasp exploded with laughter over the comms. I really don’t think anybody else has the right ‘assets.’ Now hurry up, engineer.

That reprimand put an end to Sai’s hesitation. With shaking hands, she once again lifted her shirt up to her collar and let her huge tits fall free.

The simple sensation of air on her skin was enough to make Sai's nipples stiffen and turn her face crimson. Everything she'd felt on the turbolift came flooding back. She was exposed again, but this time in front of dozens of people. There was no way nobody here would recognize her. She couldn't get that lucky. This time, there were sure to be consequences. Real consequences. Even that was like in her fantasies - the extreme ones, the ones she was most afraid to indulge.

All Sai could do now was squeeze her eyes closed and pray.

Don't look. Please don't look. Please nobody look. Don't let anyone look.

No matter how much part of her wanted them to.

Thirty seconds. It might as well have been an eternity.

Sai tried to ignore the pounding of her heart and counted, slowly and deliberately, all the way to five seconds.

She opened her eyes again. At first, as she glanced around the bustling canteen, she thought she might have gotten her wish.

Then she met someone's gaze. At least, almost. They were definitely looking at Sai. But they definitely weren't looking at her face.

Noticing that was a molten spear through Sai's gut. She convulsed as a wave of pleasure took her, washing over her skin, making her shiver and squirm. It was everything she wanted and everything she'd dreaded - and again, her body and her base urges were betraying her sense of judgment.

It shouldn't have felt this good.

But it did.

Ten seconds.

Shame made Sai look away, but all that did for her was make her notice that it wasn't just one person. She could count three or four crew members staring at her. Something about the way she was standing or writhing - her exposed skin, perhaps - was steadily catching the eyes of people who were sat facing her. One by one, people's eyes fixed on her, their faces slipping into expressions of shock, disbelief, and - just as often - rowdy enjoyment.

Sai was electrified by it. There was an energy flowing through her, but it wasn't like the turbolift. That had been private, between her and that stranger. A sense of secret complicity. This was something else entirely. Now, the ones staring at her were sharing something. Their astonishment. Their captivation. Their lust.

They weren't just individual witnesses. They were an audience.

Unbidden, Wasp's words came back to Sai. *Give all these nice people a show.*

That was her. She was the show. She was a spectacle.

Sai was a serious, professional, dedicated, career-minded engineer - but not here, not now, not anymore. Now, she was no different from a girl stripping for a handful of credits in some scummy dive bar. That was all anybody was seeing, as they looked at her.

And it was all thanks to her huge, slutty tits.

Fifteen seconds.

There was a kind of release to knowing that Sai had crossed an irrevocable threshold - and with it, a temptation. Why not go even further, while she was trapped here by Wasp's orders? Once the thought appeared in her head, it was an itch. A need. A moment of giddy inspiration made Sai straighten her back and fix her posture, pushing out her chest for inspection by everyone who was watching.

Her reward was fresh licks of shameful pleasure.

The more people looked, the worse it was. The better it was. And more were looking, more and more each second - Sai could see heads starting to turn in her direction as some of the crewmen facing away from her craned their necks to see what had caught their friends' attention. Once they turned, they didn't turn away. Some were even pointing. Sai was becoming the center of attention.

It made her unbearably horny.

Twenty seconds.

Sai wasn't sure how she was going to stay on her feet for another ten. She'd never been so turned on. She wanted to run, but she couldn't. She wanted to collapse, but she couldn't. She wanted to debase herself even more by touching her own tits to release just a little of the need that had built inside her, but she couldn't. She needed to hold her shirt up so she was giving everyone a good show.

Fuck. How amazing would it feel if everyone saw her doing that?

Everyone was looking now. Staring. Ogling. The last few heads had turned. A stunned hush had settled over the room. All eyes were on Sai, and she could feel each and every pair roving across her skin. She was burning with the sensation of them. The way every single gaze settled inevitably on her chest was such a thrill. Her tits were just that good. Just that big. They were more important than her

face. More important than her mind or her personality.

Just a pair of tits.

It was so hot to think of herself that way.

Twenty-five seconds.

Someone wolf-whistled. Sai was melting down. She was so turned on she was delirious. Feverish. With each heartbeat, she oscillated wildly between gut-wrenching anxiety and dizzying excitement. She couldn't take any more. This experience had already blown all of her fantasies completely out of the water. What was going to happen to her now? Sai could scarcely imagine.

Surely, soon, someone was going to stop her. An officer, maybe. Someone would stand up and say something. Yell at her. Or maybe not. Maybe they'd keep watching. Maybe it would go beyond just watching. Some of the people watching her were obviously turned on. Maybe they'd touch themselves looking at her. How would that feel? Better than this? Was that even possible?

Sai didn't know. But fuck, she wanted them to keep looking.

Thirty seconds.

Sai felt the moment she was released from Wasp's order like a bucket of icy water. She had agency again. The pendulum swung back to shame. Sai's sense of preservation and decency kicked back into gear, and in a frenzy she struggled to fit her shirt back over her tits and cover herself. She forced her legs into motion, keen to drag herself out of the canteen and back to her bunk and-

Captain says: don't move.

Sai froze, of course. She couldn't disobey Wasp. Not even if it meant being rooted to the spot while two dozen incredulous crewmen stared at her.

Wasp giggled over the comms. *Captain says: pull down your panties and show everyone just how much you enjoyed that.*

Oh god.

Sai was twitching wildly as she gradually turned back to face her audience. Yes, somehow this was worse. If she did that, everyone would know for sure. This wasn't a prank or a dare or a lost bet. They'd all know for certain that she was an exhibitionist pervert who was actively getting off on exposing herself. That was an even greater measure of humiliation.

And yet, as Sai's shaking hands moved down and started unbuckling her belt, a wild, crazed, uneven smile came to her face. She was practically laughing with sick glee as she unzipped her pants and hooked a thumb into her underwear, pulling them down and out of the way.

All anyone needed to see to know how much she was enjoying herself was the thick, dripping, sticky strings of hot wetness that ran between her cunt and her clothes.

After a few seconds, Sai felt she'd satisfied the order, and with that, she could flee - but not before she had time to register the looks of leering amazement on the faces of everyone around her.

It made her cum.

Sai had no time to process that. All she could do was try to keep her legs from giving out underneath her as she ran out of the canteen and back in the vague direction of the turbolifts.

That was real. It had happened. All that was real.

Fuck.

That was as hot as it was devastating.

That was fucking amazing, Wasp tittered in her ear. You should have seen the looks on their faces! Oh, who are we kidding? You were just as obsessed as they were. Finding a freak like you is so fun. Just think! Soon, you'll be the talk of the whole ship.

Sai whimpered and clenched her thighs together.

Anyway, Wasp added. Almost done! Just one more thing. Captain says: head on down to engineering.

“Y-yes... captain...”

Sai was too addled to contemplate the order. She just started staggering towards the lift, the sheer power of Wasp's orders ensuring that she kept putting one leg in front of the other, no matter how much she wanted to slump against the nearest wall and give in to her body's needs. At least she knew the way. The *Inyx's* main engineering bay was her primary post; Sai could have gotten there in her sleep. She wasn't much better than asleep as she trudged there, foggy head lost in stray thoughts about what she'd just done.

Mercifully, this time there was nobody else in the turbolift.

But mercy ran out fast. Once she reached the engineering bay, deep in the ship, where the constant growl of the ship's engines drowned out the sound of footsteps, Sai put her head around the door and saw the very last person she'd wanted to see her like this.

Chief Engineer Madina Arquette. Sai's immediate superior - and

her long-held crush.

Sai's heart leaped back into her mouth. No. Not this. She didn't want Madina seeing her like this, with her clothes disheveled, eyes hazed, cheeks flushed, and chest unbound. Madina was different. Special. She'd been Sai's mentor on the *Inyx*. She was stern, but in her own way, she'd been so kind. So supportive. Sai had caught feelings. Madina was more than just fodder for her fantasies. If there was one person's respect she couldn't bear the thought of losing, it was Madina.

Time for the grand finale, engineer, Wasp said. Captain says: go in there and show her your tits.

Sai froze. Freezing was shameful; on an Alliance's starship, the captain's orders were paramount. There was no room for questioning or hesitating, not when it really counted. But still, she froze. Seeing Madina had reminded her that despite how humiliating flashing people on the lift and in the canteen had been, she still wasn't at rock bottom. Not yet.

Flashing Madina would feel different. She was sure of it. She knew Madina well. They worked together every day. And she had a crush on the older engineer. The thought of Madina, of all people, staring at her like all those people in the canteen had tied her stomach into knots. If she saw scorn and disappointment in Madina's eyes, it would feel terrible.

But... what if it didn't? What if it felt good instead?

That would be awful too. Then, she'd be using Madina to get off. That was the last thing Sai wanted. It would be unimaginably disrespectful. For that very reason, Sai had scrupulously refused to touch upon Madina in any of her waking fantasies.

But what if...

Hey, what's the hold-up? Wasp complained.

"I... can't," Sai replied, despite how wrong it felt. "She's..."

Wasp's laughter overrode her. *Oh, now this is fun!* she whooped. *This is what I've been missing. Finally! Unfortunately for you, engineer, this is mission-critical. Captain says: show her your tits. Now.*

Sai shuddered. She'd never needed to be told an order twice before. Disobeying such a direct, urgent command was unthinkable. If her career wasn't already over, it would be after the court-martial. With that in mind, the engineer started to move. She took one step, then another, then another, her stomach churning as she walked into the engineering bay.

"Engineer Kabir? Is that..."

The gruff older woman glanced up in recognition as she heard Sai approach. Then, the words died on her lips as her eyes settled exactly where everyone's eyes had kept settling. She was staring at Sai's chest in amazement.

Sai almost came again.

"I... didn't think you were on duty today." With visible effort, Madina fixed her eyes back down on her work. She was clearly trying not to react. Even that made Sai's breathing come in tight gasps. "Be warned: if you hang around, I'll put you to work."

"I-I... I was just..."

Sai realized she had no idea what to say. Wasp's order was still itching at her, but flashing Madina seemed unthinkable. Just being in her presence with her chest unbound was overwhelming enough.

Knowing that she'd seen. Knowing she was trying not to stare. Knowing she was thinking about it. Nothing had made her heart pound quite this fast.

Hurry up, engineer, Wasp taunted. Captain says: show her your tits. Not just a quick flash. Get her attention. Make sure she understands what you're feeling. I think you deserve it.

"C-c-can't..." Sai whimpered as her head started to spin. Conflicting instincts gnawed at her, and the wicked allure of Wasp's suggestion took flight in her mind like an eagle. It was enough to bring her to her knees.

Madina glanced at her again, brow furrowed. "What was that? Are you OK, Kabir?"

Her attention made it all the worse. Sai couldn't take it any longer. She had to choose. Obey, or flee.

C'mon, Wasp encouraged. Be real. You know you want to. Captain says: admit it.

That was what broke her.

As she heard that, Sai was left with no choice but to admit it to herself: she wanted to. She wanted to show Madina her tits. She wanted Madina to look at her. To stare at her. For her crush to see her at her lowest point, exposing herself, her huge, lewd, undignified tits spilling out of her top, wasn't the last thing she wanted. It was the first. She'd just been too scared to face up to it. Too scared of what it would mean. Fuck, she'd even written a holodeck scenario about her and Madina. She'd just never worked up the courage to try booting it.

But now, here Sai was. The moment was upon her. All she had to do was reach up and remove one flimsy little piece of fabric.

Her lust tipped the scales.

The instant Sai felt herself decide, she was utterly swept away by a tide of euphoric, reckless abandon. It was like she was skydiving, like the floor had collapsed underneath her, but she didn't care. It didn't matter what was going to happen when she hit the ground. All she wanted was to enjoy the thrill of the fall. She wanted to fall further, harder, faster.

If it had been possible, she'd have wanted the entire ship to see her.

A huge, stupid, horny grin came to Sai's face. Madina's eyes widened as she saw the expression dawn on her protégé, and Sai loved that. She wanted Madina to look. She wanted Madina to drink in the sight. Every last moment of it.

"Chief, I have something important to show you," Sai breathed. Her voice was swelling with excitement.

"Alright then." Madina seemed surprised, but set her work tools down and folded her arms. She was giving Sai her full attention. "What is it?"

Sai shivered in delirious rapture. This was going to be incredible. "L-look closely, OK?"

The way Madina leaned in and started peering attentively at her was just delicious. Sai allowed herself to take it slow and savor the moment as she pressed her chest out pointedly, hooked her fingers under the hem of her uniform, and lifted her top.

As soon as she felt cold air against her nipples, she was in a state of rapture. This was it. Rock bottom. Madina would never look at her the same way again. This woman, who she respected so much, was finally seeing her for what she was. An exhibitionist slut. A dumb,

slutty pair of tits. A woman who belonged on stage in a strip joint, not in the engineering bay of a starship.

Sai knew now. That was exactly what she was. Nothing more. She couldn't win against her own kinks. Never again. Not after tasting this high. She was ruined. Permanently.

Fuck. She'd be touching herself to this forever.

With bated breath, Sai waited for the first comment. The first reproach. Madina Arquette was never a woman to spare harsh words when they were needed. Just imagining the scorn that would fill her voice made Sai wet. She knew that would feel better than anything. It would be the ultimate proof of just how much she'd lost. And beyond that? Maybe Madina would have her hauled to the brig. Maybe even have her dishonorably discharged.

If she did, it would still have been worth it.

But the words never came.

Madina just stood there, perfectly still. At first, Sai assumed she was simply stunned by Sai flashing her. That was rewarding, in its way. But then it went on too long. Madina didn't freeze up. She was better than that. Sai looked at her more closely. There was something in the engineering chief's ear.

An earpiece.

And there were spirals in her eyes.

Sorry to ruin the fun, Wasp snickered. Couldn't risk her telling on you. She knows you a little too well. So I had Dr. Hiraga bump her up on the schedule. But hey - at least you got your moment.

“What are you-“ Sai started to say.

Over the comm link, there was a sound like the snapping of fingers. An instant later, in a lightning bolt flash of kaleidoscopic color, the spirals were back. They dominated Sai’s vision. The room around her disappeared, and with it, everything about how she was feeling. Arousal, shame, confusion, doubt - all gone. She was empty. Blank.

Hypnotized.

God, this was a riot, Wasp sighed. But you know what they say about good things. I really can’t keep you at seventy percent forever, engineer. Let me just give you one more for the road. Captain says: you two go ahead and lez out like happy, brainwashed little dolls while the implant finished off your indoctrination. Got it?

Wordlessly, Sai and Madina obeyed. The two of them stepped into each other’s arms and pressed their lips together in a facsimile of passion as, deep in the most forgotten corners of Sai’s mind, she felt the last semblance of her free will draining away.

CHAPTER SEVEN

“So, just to be absolutely clear,” said Counselor Alara Hisarlik, “you believe that the crew of this ship is gradually succumbing to some form of mind control?”

Lieutenant Semya Kuznetzov, Captain Vasser’s second-in-command, shifted uncomfortably in her seat. Hearing it out loud was even worse than she’d anticipated, even though Alara, the *Inyx*’s counselor, was somehow able to keep her voice free from scorn or incredulity. The chair wasn’t helping. The counselor’s office had big comfy, cushioned, reclining chairs that couldn’t be found elsewhere on the ship. They were meant to be relaxing; for Kuznetzov, they were proving just the opposite.

“Not... I wouldn’t put it quite like that,” Lieutenant Kuznetzov replied slowly. She was choosing her words carefully. She knew she sounded crazy, but hopefully not completely crazy. “I know how it sounds. And I’m not exactly convinced of it. But I am worried about it. It’s what my gut is telling me, I guess. I just can’t shake the feeling.”

“I see.” Alara leaned in, concerned. “And this is because of the behavior of the crew?”

“Yes,” Lieutenant Kuznetzov explained. “I’ve been noticing something wrong with people, all across the ship. I keep catching crew members spacing out at strange moments, like they’re listening to a voice I can’t hear. Often groups of people at once. But

afterward, they'll insist nothing happened. Or I'll notice them moving in perfect harmony. Unnatural harmony." She sighed. "There's this ancient movie: Invasion of the Body Snatchers. Maybe you've heard of it. Pod people? It's like that."

Alara nodded. "That's very troubling. I can understand why this would be preying on your mind."

It was easy to see why Alara Hisarlik was a ship's counselor. She was, quite simply, perfect for the role. In her early fifties - Kuznetzov had read every crew member's personnel file - she was older than most of the people on the ship, and had an effortlessly matronly demeanor that made her shockingly easy to talk to. Her office was comfortable, warm, and friendly, and since she didn't need to wear a uniform she was free to dress herself in a comfortable jumpsuit that made her seem all the more disarming.

The jumpsuit was plenty flattering, too, and Kuznetzov observed that Alara was taking full advantage of the fact that she didn't need to pass Alliance fitness tests either. Her physique was just as motherly as her demeanor, and it suited her well. Kuznetzov felt a little guilty for noticing that, but it couldn't be helped. She was a lesbian, after all.

"It has been," Lieutenant Kuznetzov confessed. "That's why I'm here. I needed to talk to someone."

"Why not Captain Vasser?" Alara asked. "If you suspect something's wrong on the ship, surely she needs to know."

Lieutenant Kuznetzov hesitated before answering. "I considered it," she replied eventually. "But I really can't tell if I'm just being paranoid. If I am, then you're the person I need to talk to. Not the captain. And if I'm not paranoid, then..."

"Then it's entirely possible she's been affected too," Alara

finished. "Is that right?"

Lieutenant Kuznetsov nodded, grateful she didn't have to be the one to say it. "I've noticed she's seemed a little... off, lately."

"I see." Alara took that in stride and smiled kindly. "But you're happy talking to me. I take it I seem like my usual self?"

"Yes," Lieutenant Kuznetsov said, before adding: "as far as I'd know, anyway."

This was the first time Kuznetsov had taken it upon herself to visit the ship's counselor. She'd never seen the need. Doctor Hiraga handled routine psych evals; the counselor was for the benefit of crew members who just needed to talk, or who preferred to speak with someone who was a couple of steps outside the usual chain of command. Kuznetsov, though, preferred to deal with her own problems herself. She was the stoic type, or so she liked to think. It suited her butch looks and dress sense. But her current troubles necessitated a reality check, and she'd judged that Alara Hisarlik was the best person to speak with.

"Glad to hear it," Alara replied, a touch playfully, before turning more serious. "Lieutenant, this is clearly a new feeling for you. Have you been under any particular stress lately?"

Kuznetsov shook her head. "No more than usual."

"That's good! Now, I know you haven't been assigned to the *Inyx* for long. You were transferred just recently. Have you been fitting in well?"

"I believe so. Captain Vasser seems happy with my performance."

"What about socially? Have you gotten to know the other

officers?”

Kuznetzov gave a slight smile. “I’m not exactly a social butterfly. It doesn’t bother me.”

“I see.” Alara sounded a little less pleased with that answer, but didn’t press the issue. “And there’s nothing else that’s been on your mind? Nothing troubling?”

“No, not at all.”

“Hm.” Alara cocked her head to one side. “Well, Lieutenant, I don’t think you’re crazy. That doesn’t mean you’re right about this mind control thing either, of course, but it does behoove me to investigate concerns about the mental states of other crew members aboard this ship. There may be a perfectly innocent explanation. To that end, I think the best course of action is that we keep this between ourselves for now, and I discreetly form my own opinion. Could you give me the names of some of the people you’ve been suspicious of?”

Kuznetzov nodded. “I’ll make a list and send it over.”

“Very good.” Alara smiled again. “I’ll let you know what I think very soon.”

“Perfect.” Kuznetzov felt the tension in her shoulders easing, and she sighed with relief. “And... thank you, counselor. Not knowing whether this is real or not has really been weighing on me. I’m very grateful that you’ve taken me seriously. I’m not sure whether or not I expect you to form the same impression I have, but just knowing that you’re looking into it puts my mind at ease.”

“You’re very welcome.” Alara’s smile grew even warmer. “That’s exactly what I’m here for, Lieutenant.”



Alara tapped her soon impatiently against the rim of her teacup as she waited for her next appointment to arrive. Crewman Hannah Weiss was late, of course. Everyone on this ship was always late. They always had excuses, of course. Important duties and important orders, on their important mission to catch Wasp. Everything on the *Inyx* was so damn important. Everything except for Alara and her counseling sessions.

The one thing nobody on the crew seemed to make any time for was taking care of their own mental health - which meant that, as the ship's counselor, Alara's life was devoted entirely to chasing after other people's problems. After all these years on the job, they were just so infuriatingly cliché. Burnout. Anxiety. Insecurity. She'd heard it all before.

That didn't mean Alara didn't care, of course. She wanted to help just as much as she had when she'd first started out in this line of work, three decades before. What had made her bored and cynical over the years was learning that she couldn't help, because no one ever listened. Alara could offer advice, training, medical, therapy - and it didn't matter because, to most people, she was nothing more than a convenient way to unburden themselves. They didn't respect her or her expertise, and so she was condemned to the Sisyphean experience of listening to crewman after crewman coming to bleat to her about some inane problem, giving them the perfect advice, and seeing them out the door knowing perfectly well that they weren't going to heed it.

If only there was some way to make them listen.

As a result, even as Alara had aged into the perfect, matronly counselor everyone wanted, she'd become thoroughly disillusioned and tired of her work. The years had ground her down, leaving her cynical and hopeless. She'd vowed this would be her final tour of

duty aboard an Alliance ship, but fate had conspired to drag them out to the far rim for months longer than expected, chasing shadows, leaving Alara more frustrated by the day. The crewmen who darkened her door were becoming nothing more than an indistinct succession of blurred faces, each more forgettable and annoying than the last.

At least, until Lieutenant Kuznetsov.

A conspiracy to take over the ship by secretly mind-controlling members of the crew? In all her years as a counselor, Alara hadn't heard that one before. It sounded like a paranoid delusion, but Kuznetsov's psychological profile was rock solid. She displayed no signs of any associated psychological tendencies or conditions that would predispose her to such an elaborate delusion. Which meant that Alara finally had something that could hold her attention.

If nothing else, a spontaneous delusion like this could make for a half-decent case study to write up.

But first, Alara figured that she should investigate what Kuznetsov had been suspecting, and so she'd arranged an innocuous appointment with one of the people the XO had mentioned: Crewman Hannah Weiss. Mind control was unlikely, but not strictly impossible, and talking to her could shed light on reasons she might have been behaving differently or suspiciously.

And if it was mind control? Alara certainly couldn't miss out on a chance to study it up close and personal. She had a deep, abiding interest in the subject. Strictly professional, of course.

The door to Alara's office chimed to indicate that her appointment had finally arrived. The counselor set down her teacup, rose to her feet, and went to greet her guest.

"Crewman Weiss," Alara said, plastering her well-worn

welcoming smile on her face as the door opened. "Thank you for coming. Please, come in."

"Alara."

Hannah Weiss offered a friendly nod as she entered the room. She was young - less than half Alara's age, in fact - and much slighter and mousier than most expected of a member of the Alliance military. The *Inyx* was her first posting, and she'd been struggling to adjust to the rigor and claustrophobia of starship life. Though she'd adjusted over time, following up on her earlier troubles was a reasonable pretext for an appointment.

"Have a seat," Alara said as she beckoned Weiss in.

She was gesturing to one of the two big, comfy chairs that dominated her office's central space. Alara had made her office as comfortable and welcoming as the *Inyx*'s small, spartan bulkheads allowed. In the center of the space, between the chairs, was a simple table, and the room was lit by a special bank of holographic lights that could provide gentle, soothing illumination when needed.

The two of them sat down, and Alara immediately leaned forward so that she could pour Weiss a cup of tea from the still-steaming teapot on the table. Weiss accepted it gratefully, and then Alara sat back with her own teacup and teaspoon in hand.

"So, um," Weiss began nervously. "What's this about?"

"Nothing serious," Alara immediately assured her. "I just wanted to check up on you, now that you've been with us for a few months. Have you been having any more issues?"

"No!" Weiss answered in a rush. "Um... h-has somebody said something to you?"

“Not at all,” Alara replies gently. Clearly, Weiss was as anxious and twitchy as ever. “This is completely routine. Now - how have you been doing lately?”

Weiss took a cautious sip of her tea; it proved to be too hot for her. “I’ve been OK,” she answered. “Good. At least, I think. I’ve been having an easier time performing my duties.”

“I’m glad.” Alara smiled at her as she lifted her own teacup. “What about the anxiety you’ve spoken to me about before?”

“It’s better,” Weiss said quickly. She seemed embarrassed to have it brought up to her face. “I mean... sometimes, I still... but it’s easier, now. It feels like I can just kind of... zone out a bit. Get in the zone. Do whatever I need to do, without thinking too much.”

“I see.”

That caught Alara’s interest. It sounded more like dissociation than adjustment. According to her superiors, though, her performance was entirely adequate. That level of automatism was outside of Weiss’s psychological profile. It could indicate that her mental state was being tampered with.

This was exactly what Alara had secretly been longing to hear. She’d agreed with herself that if Weiss seemed completely normal, it would be unethical to pry too deeply into her state of mind. But if there was any suggestion that what Kuznetsov had talked about was true, Alara had an obligation to investigate, fully and discretely.

And it was an obligation she’d relish. What student of psychology wouldn’t? Mind control had always been something of a fascination of hers, ever since her days in college. In academic psychology circles it was considered an unusual, quaint, even useless subject, far more hypothetical than practical, but now more than ever, Alara was grateful she’d taken those classes. Thanks to them,

she knew exactly what she needed to do with Weiss.

She needed to hypnotize her.

It made perfect sense. How easily she went into a trance could help Alara to gauge if she'd been conditioned to be susceptible to mind-alteration, and if Alara was able to speak to her subconscious mind, she might be able to bypass whatever form of mind control was currently in effect. An unorthodox approach, perhaps, and not one most ship's counselors would have been familiar with, but Alara always made sure she was brushed up on her technique.

"Hannah," she said, once she'd made up her mind. "If it's alright with you, I'd like to hypnotize you."

Weiss blinked. "Excuse me?"

"It's a completely standard therapeutic technique." Alara figured a little massaging of the truth wouldn't do any harm. "A way to relax. A kind of meditation, you could call it. I think it could really help you."

"Right." Weiss still seemed a touch incredulous. "But... hypnosis? Isn't that just some old thing from twentieth-century media?"

Alara just kept smiling. "Not quite. I assure you, it's very real. Are you ready to get started?"

"I-I guess." Weiss glanced down nervously. Alara had known that she'd crumble if Alara pushed just a little. "What do I need to do?"

"Nothing much," Alara soothed. "Just sit right there and get as comfortable as you can."

Weiss started to shift in her seat, settling in, and as she did Alara

used the console built into the arm of her chair to dim the lights. Weiss was still visibly a little on edge, but Alara was sure she'd relax as soon as the counselor got to work on her. The young crewman wasn't difficult to influence.

"Good," Alara said approvingly once Weiss sat back. Even as she made her voice carefully low and rhythmic, she spoke like they were yet to begin and she was just making conversation. "The chairs are comfy, aren't they? One of the perks of the job."

"Yeah," Weiss agreed. She seemed faintly grateful to be talking about something other than herself.

"Not many people on an Alliance starship get chairs like these." Alara winked at Weiss. "Not even amongst the officers. You might as well enjoy them while you're here! I know I do."

"Yeah," Weiss said again. "They are really nice. Now that you mention it, I don't think I've been this comfortable in months."

"Exactly." Alara nodded enthusiastically. "You know, sometimes, when I can get away with it, I just dim the lights - just like this, in fact - sit down, close my eyes, and let myself drift off a little. Let my mind wander. I have to admit, once or twice I've actually fallen asleep like that. I must be getting old."

Weiss giggled. "That sounds nice." From her voice, it was obvious that she was feeling more and more at ease.

"It's easy for me, of course. All I have to do is lock the door, and anyone who knocks will think I'm in a private appointment." Alara heard another, even more relaxed giggle from Weiss. "I know a crewman like you won't get nearly as many chances to relax. Not with your superior officers breathing down your neck."

"Yeah..." Weiss replied wearily.

“Well, there’s no pressure here,” Alara promised. “Why not give it a try yourself? Close your eyes.”

Weiss looked up uncertainly for a moment, but then obliged. “OK.”

“Very good,” Alara said as Weiss’s eyelids fell shut. She already knew Weiss could be susceptible to positive reinforcement. “You’re more than welcome to take a few moments for yourself, Hannah. Just sit back. Relax. Forget I’m even here.”

Alara could tell that, whether she meant to or not, Weiss was hearkening to her words. Her shoulders were slumping and her breathing slowing. She couldn’t help but relax.

“Perfect,” Alara encouraged. “You must be very tired. Running all over the ship all the time, being ordered around constantly by your superiors. It’s exhausting. Trust me, I’ve been there - once upon a time. I know how it feels. When you’re tired like that, nothing compares to getting to take the weight off your feet. You just can’t help but sink into it.”

“Yeah...” Weiss let out a weary sigh. “That’s really... um... but should we get started?”

Alara had to suppress a laugh. “We already have.”

At that Weiss stirred - but only a little. Alara was pleased to see that already, she was unwilling or unable to shake off her lethargy. She couldn’t even bring herself to open her eyes. The poor girl really was exhausted.

Unless she wasn’t. Unless there was another reason she was so susceptible.

“What do you mean?” Weiss asked. She sounded distant.

“Hypnosis is just a state of mind,” Alara told her. She made her voice softer still; soothing, but so quiet Weiss had to devote all her attention to each one of the counselor’s words. “A nice, relaxed state of mind. You’re nice and relaxed now, aren’t you? That means you’re halfway there already.”

“Oh...” Weiss’s voice was growing fainter by the moment. It was obvious she was already too dazed to really interrogate what Alara was saying to her. Weiss was proving incredibly susceptible. Alarming so, in fact.

At least it made it easy for Alara to take advantage.

“You’re doing very well,” Alara assured her. “This is exactly what we want. Going under hypnosis is perfectly easy, and you’re already doing a wonderful job. And because you’re doing so well, you might notice your awareness changing. You might notice that lots of things that normally bother and distract you are just kind of fading away. Maybe it’s the little aches and pains in your body. Maybe it’s some of the little thoughts and worries you sometimes find yourself dwelling on. Whatever it may be, I’m sure you can notice it simply fading into the background of your mind.”

Weiss just nodded and let out a faint, murmured noise of agreement.

“At the same time,” Alara continued, voice soft and melodic. “You might notice some things you usually tune out. For me, when I’m nice and relaxed, it’s always the ship’s engines. When you first come aboard, they seem so noisy, don’t they? But after a few days or weeks, you completely stop noticing them. Everyone does.”

Another nod.

“But when I’m as relaxed as you are now, I seem to find the sound again,” Alara went on. “That low, droning hum. It’s all I can think about. And it’s not just a sound. It’s a sensation. A vibration. Something you can feel throughout your entire body.”

She noticed Weiss shiver slightly. Clearly, she was feeling it.

“Hannah,” Alara said. “That sound is all you need to think about right now. So it’s completely fine if you just zone out and give it all of your attention. You don’t even need to think about my voice. You don’t need to listen. You can just yourself drift and sink, and maybe every now and then, as my voice and my words float through your head, you’ll find your attention naturally ebbing back towards me. Just letting my words be your guide, whenever it feels natural.”

Weiss seemed so very relaxed now. She was barely moving at all, except for the slow, pronounced rise and fall of her chest. She looked all but asleep, but Alara could tell she wasn’t from the telltale way her eyes pricked up, ever so slightly, whenever Alara spoke. She was hanging on the counselor’s every word, be it consciously or subconsciously.

Alara was fascinated. It was like this girl was the perfect subject. She leaned in, eager to drink in every little detail of how Weiss reacted.

“That’s right,” she urged breathily. “Let me be your guide. You can just let my voice flow in and out of you, letting my words guide you, knowing that this is a safe place and that you can trust me. Everything that happens here is safe, Hannah. I’m here to take care of you. Here to guide you.”

Another nod, this one barely perceptible. Weiss was clearly on the brink.

“And because I’m here to guide you,” Alara pressed, “it’s completely OK for you to just let go. To completely let go. To surrender that last little bit of awareness that’s keeping you from complete, perfect relaxation. Doesn’t it sound nice to just give that up, once and for all?”

A quiet, sleepy murmur of appreciation was her only reply.

“Of course it does,” Alara assured her. “You can leave everything up to me for a little while. Even thinking. Doesn’t that sound good? And I think you’re ready for it. I’m going to count you down, from five to zero. When I say ‘zero’, you’re going to feel the burden of every last thought lifting from your shoulders, and you will be perfectly hypnotized. Ready?”

No reply at all this time, but Alara could sense Hannah was primed and ready.

“Five,” she counted. “Feeling yourself beginning to sink. Beginning to descend.”

Weiss’s shoulders slumped still deeper.

“Four,” Alara counted. “Even that hum, the sound of the engines, is starting to grow faint.”

The movement behind her subject’s eyes had all but disappeared.

“Three. Only my voice. That’s all that’s left. Not even in your conscious mind, just in your subconsciousness.”

Weiss’s head began to loll to one side.

“Two. Whether you know it or not, you’re already preparing yourself to let go completely. You’re anticipating how it’s going to

feel.”

One of Weiss’s arms slipped from the armrest of her chair, hanging limply off to one side. She didn’t stir.

“One. Feeling yourself on the precipice now, relaxed and attentive and ready to let go as soon as I say... zero.”

Weiss froze. She just froze. She didn’t slump forward or backward the way someone might if they had fallen asleep. Instead, she just became still as her mind shut down, leaving her only just conscious enough to keep herself suspended in the position she’d been resting in. She couldn’t move. Not unless Alara told her to. Hannah Weiss was now nothing more than a blank, open receptacle for whatever the counselor wanted to do to her.

Alara knew the signs well. It had been just as perfect as she’d always dreamed. Weiss was completely and perfectly hypnotized.

As tempting as it was to simply bask in the moment, Alara knew she had to consider what that meant. Weiss had sunk like a stone. Alara was confident of her technique and it was possible that the crewman was simply a natural subject, but given what Kuzentsov had told her, it was equally possible that she’d been conditioned this way. That she was already under the lingering effects of some form of mind control.

But still, it was too early to raise the alarm. Alara decided that more testing was called for. It was the only professionally responsible way to proceed.

“Hannah, can you hear me?” she asked. “Answer me nice and clearly, please.”

“Yes,” Weiss replied. Her voice was far stronger and clearer than it had been while she’d been going under, but it was also completely

devoid of any emotion or feeling whatsoever. Hearing it sent chills racing through Alara.

“Good,” Alara said. “Now, raise your right arm.”

Slowly and steadily, Weiss obeyed. Her movements were stiff, even unnatural, like she was little more than a mannequin whose strings were being pulled. But as Alara watched, her right arm - the one that had been hanging off the side of her chair, started to lift up into the air until Weiss was holding it out straight in front of herself.

Immediate, unquestioning, unhesitating obedience. ‘Suggestible’ didn’t even begin to cover it.

That seemed significant, but Alara found herself distracted by how she herself was reacting. Seeing Weiss obey her like that sent even greater chills through her body, and filled her stomach with butterflies. She was experiencing a giddy, intoxicating thrill the likes of which she hadn’t felt in years. This was unbelievable. It was like a dream come true.

Alara had fantasized about things like this for decades. In her youth, those fantasies had even moved her to study psychology. She’d never imagined anything close to them would ever become a reality. It would almost be a shame when she had to put an end to it and wake Weiss up.

But she didn’t yet, did she? Alara decided there was more testing to be done. She needed to establish some parameters. Clearly Weiss was susceptible to mind control, but did that represent any real danger? Raising an arm was something anyone might do if you asked them to. Alara needed to know if Weiss might prove dangerous to the rest of the crew. She needed to test if she could push the boundaries of the young woman’s morality.

“Hannah,” Alara said, very slowly. “Take off your uniform.”

Immediately, Weiss came to life again. She rose to her feet, slowly but steadily, and began to methodically peel away the layers of her standard-issue Alliance uniform. She started with the jacket, unzipping it across her body and shrugging it from her shoulders before she reached down to remove her pants.

Alara watched the entire process, enraptured. She was used to telling the crew of this ship what they should do. She wasn't at all used to them obeying. The experience was unfamiliar - but far from unpleasant. For once, Alara felt powerful. She felt in control.

And she liked it.

If all the crew were like this, maybe she could actually fix them and their silly little problems. They'd listen to Alara's every word. They'd have to. She could have them dancing to her tune. They would be perfectly behaved for once. They'd have to be.

An enticing concept.

Once Weiss finished undressing, she was left standing at attention in nothing more than her plain, white underwear. Her blank eyes were fixed straight ahead, seeing and comprehending nothing, and her face registered no embarrassment or discomfort. In that moment, Alara felt like she could do anything she wanted to the girl - and before she could stop herself, an urge got the better of her.

"Those too." Alara gestured to Weiss's bra and panties. "Take them off."

Again, she obeyed. Alara was left rationalizing. Maybe telling her to remove her uniform simply wasn't pushing her far enough. After all, simply being seen in your underwear was far from the worst thing. Nakedness was the logical next step. Alara was just

investigating. That was all.

So what if she was also enjoying it?

Slipping out of her remaining clothes didn't take Weiss long. Soon enough she was completely naked, and no less hypnotized for it. She was still completely and totally empty-headed. Watching her strip left Alara's mouth dry. For all her rationalizing, she was conscious of the fact that she'd crossed a line. Anything Alara did beyond this point was truly taboo. It was conduct deeply unbecoming of a ship's counselor.

But in her heart of hearts, she knew she couldn't just stop. Not yet. Perhaps not ever.

"Sit down," Alara instructed. Every time Weiss obeyed, it sent a fresh wave of heat through the older woman's body. It was addictive. "Spread your legs."

Hannah sat back down on the chair behind her and robotically moved her thighs apart until her legs were splayed wide, exposing herself to anyone who might have been watching. The pose was unmistakably sexual - but still, she wasn't waking up. She wasn't even stirring. There was no hint that Alara was approaching her limits. What had been done to the poor girl? Did she even have limits?

Alara needed to find out. She was burning to find out.

What about touch? She'd yet to try that, and she was so desperately curious. Alara rose from her seat and reached out - slowly, at first, but with a growing eagerness and hunger. There was no turning back now, after all.

At first, she kept it innocent. Her fingertips met Weiss's skin on the hypnotized girl's stomach. Hannah was as unresponsive as a

statue; it was Alara who gasped faintly at the way Weiss' soft, pale skin yielded to her touch. A fresh sense of power surged with the counselor. Weiss seemed so much more like a doll than a person, now. That very thought was intoxicating. And beyond that - it was really, irresistibly hot.

Alara's hand started moving down, tracing a path over Weiss's navel and beyond, deviating to one side so that her knuckles brushed against Weiss's inner thighs. Finally, Hannah showed signs of life, but not the way Alara had expected. It was purely physiological: hairs standing on end, a barely-perceptible flush in her cheeks, a slight, suppressed twitch as Alara's hand strayed closer and closer to her pussy. But through it all, her eyes stayed glassy and unfocused. There was no indication that she might wake up, or that there was even a single independent thought left in her head.

Alara could scarcely believe what she was seeing. It was like a fantasy come to life. It was perfect. Fuck, it was so hot. As if in a trance herself, she kept moving, inching further and further down, until her hand was just about to touch against Hannah's-

"Oh wow! You're even more of a pervert than I'd hoped, shrink."

Alara's heart leapt into her throat. She wheeled at the voice, her cheeks already scorching hot with shame at having been discovered. She found herself face-to-face with a woman who was sitting in Alara's chair, entirely at ease, as if she'd been watching the entire time. Except that was impossible; the door to Alara's office was locked and she hadn't heard anyone knock, let alone come in.

Then, she noticed the arrays of holographic lights arranged around her office, all of which were lit up and pointed in the intruder's direction. They were running some kind of program Alara had never written. That settled it. This woman was a hologram. But that still didn't explain what was going on. Nobody could access the holographic systems in this room except Alara. For someone else to

use them, they must have hacked deep into the *Inyx*'s central computer. Which meant...

"You're... Wasp," Alara said cautiously. "Aren't you?"

She didn't recognize the hacker on sight. Alara had no reason to pay much mind to the various mission and tactical briefings the *Inyx*'s crew received, after all. But she couldn't imagine anyone else out here presenting themselves this way, with dyed, neon-green hair and in audacious, punk clothing that showed off dozens of tattoos.

"Got it in one!" Wasp giggled. "Now, let me save you some time: yes, I've hacked into your ship's systems. Yes, I have total control. Yes, I'm using holotech to brainwash the crew one-by-one, exactly as Vasser's right-hand girl suspects." She winked when Alara looked particularly offended by that last one. "Yeah. I read your patient notes. Oops, my bad."

"But..." Alara's mind was racing. "How..."

What Wasp was telling her sounded beyond impossible, but she said it so matter-of-factly, the counselor couldn't bring herself to be skeptical. And if nothing else, it would certainly explain a few things.

"Never mind that." Wasp waved a dismissive hand. "Long story. And I'd much rather talk about you." The cocksure smirk on her face took on a distinctly malicious tone, and she glanced pointedly at the still-hypnotized Weiss. "Having fun, were we?"

Alara flinched and looked down. Wasp had seen everything. Had she recorded it? "I was just..."

"Oh, there's no need to explain yourself!" Wasp taunted. She rose to her feet and started circling the room, completely at ease. "Trust me, I get it. Frankly, how could you resist?"

"I was experimenting." Alara tried to make her voice calm and firm. She had a lot of practice with that. "Performing my duty as counselor to investigate the extent of whatever mind control you've-

"Bullshit!" Wasp sang out, plainly delighted. "Admit it, shrink. You're practically dripping under that jumpsuit."

Alara couldn't quite keep her shame out of her face, and Wasp crowed with laughter.

"Don't worry," she told Alara once her laughter died. "Trust me, I'm not one to judge. And I'm not going to tell. Your naughty little secret is safe with me."

"It's not..." Alara looked away. "I made a mistake."

"Aw, don't be like that!" Wasp snorted. "It was a pleasure watching you work. You're clearly more than a little familiar with that way of getting into people's heads. Always happy to meet a kindred spirit."

Alara balled her hands into fists. She needed to move on from this. To regain some kind of control of the situation. "What do you want, Wasp? I suppose I'm to be your next victim?"

Wasp just giggled. "What gives you that idea?"

"Why else would you confront me like this?" Alara shot back. "You have no reason to take the risk of me revealing this to the captain. Not unless you plan to make sure I'm unable to."

"I like the way you think," Wasp commented. "But you're a little off, Alara. I mean, firstly, I already got to Vasser. She was the first, as a matter of fact. But more importantly, no, I don't want to make you

my next victim.”

“Then what do you want?” Alara demanded.

Wasp licked her lips. “I want you to join me.”

Alara’s blood ran cold. “Why?”

“Because that sounds fun.” Wasp paused to shrug as she waltzed around the room. “More fun than making you just another brainwashed bimbo or something. I’m getting a little bored of that. Plus, I hate to see potential go to waste. But doing my part to help the *Inyx*’s sweet little counselor embrace her wild side for a change? Now that’s a good time.”

“But...” Alara was struggling to process that. The idea that even a reckless villain like Wasp would orchestrate all of this on a mere whim was staggering. “Why would I ever...”

Wasp winked at her. “Same reason.”

Alara bristled and drew herself up. “You’ve made a serious mistake,” she warned. “And frankly, you’re delusional if you think that I would ever consider betraying both the Alliance and all of my comrades just for the sake of... of...”

Her voice trailed off and her conviction ebbed away as she found herself completely distracted by what Wasp was doing.

Wasp had circled around to the chair in which Weiss was still slumped and, as Alara was talking, had draped herself over the back of the chair and was reaching down, sliding her hands across the hypnotized crewman’s body. Alara was transfixed by the spectacle, especially when Wasp slipped a hand between Hannah’s legs and slowly, deliberately, pushed two of her fingertips into her pussy.

Alara's train of thought vanished. There was just something irresistibly magical about what she was seeing. About the way Weiss remained perfectly blank and still even as she was violated, except for just a few slight, automatic twitches as her body responded to the stimulation. No one who was simply trying or acting could have managed such total lifelessness and mindlessness. Alara's indignation was dulled, and her curiosity aroused.

It would be completely and totally unethical, of course - but Alara couldn't help but wonder about all she might be able to do with such a remarkable subject to experiment on.

"You really are a natural," Wasp whispered to her. She kept her eyes locked on Alara's even as she started finger-fucking Hannah Weiss in a slow, steady rhythm. "You knew exactly what to do with her. Almost like you've been waiting for something just like this."

Alara wanted to deny it. She wanted to, but she knew how her voice would sound if she tried.

She hadn't been waiting. Not consciously. But it was beginning to feel like she had.

"It makes me wonder," Wasp went on teasingly, matching the cadence of her voice to the way she was exploring and enjoying Weiss's body. "How far would you have gone, if I hadn't interrupted you?"

Alara shivered. She'd been asking herself the same thing.

"Would you have done this?"

Wasp pushed her fingers deeper into Weiss; all the way to the knuckle, and then further, all the way. Weiss shuddered, back arching from sheer, automatic reflex, and her deep, slow breathing

caught as Wasp touched something sensitive deep inside her. When Wasp pulled her fingers free, they were slick and sticky with wetness, and Weiss's entire body was thrumming with pleasure - but still, she couldn't wake. It was like she was having a wet dream sitting upright, with her eyes open.

Alara couldn't look away.

"Or maybe... this?" Wasp teased, bringing her hand back up Weiss's body. "Is this where your mind was going?"

She turned her attention to Weiss's mouth, prying her unresisting lips apart and slipping her still-wet fingers into her mouth. Weiss was far too deeply hypnotized to lick or suck without being told, but her tongue still yielded to Wasp as she stroked her fingertips across it, forcing Weiss to taste her own juices and leaving her with her tongue lolling a little way out of her mouth. Alara shivered as possibilities flashed through her mind.

"Ah, yes." Wasp seized upon her reaction. "She could be very good, you know. You can train her at it. Make her exactly the way you like her." She toyed idly with the tip of Weiss's tongue. A drop of saliva formed at the very end. "She'd be perfect. And the best part? She'd never even know."

"S-stop," Alara pleaded - but even as she spoke, she knew that wasn't what she wanted.

She could train Weiss. She could make her exactly the way she wanted. She could make her perfect.

How many times had she yearned for that, in all her time acting as ship's counselor on the *Inyx* or some other Alliance warship?

Just for once, Alara Hisarlik could be in control.

“You don’t want me to stop,” Wasp mocked. “Just like you didn’t want to stop yourself. Admit it - we’re way beyond principles now. This is about who you want to be, Alara. A bored, ignored headshrink? Or someone who gets what she wants?”

“Bored...?” Alara blinked. “How do you know that?”

Wasp rolled her eyes. “I’ve been reading your personal logs too. Duh. Hacker.”

Anger flared within Alara - but not brightly enough to outshine her other urges. Her darker urges. Right now, she couldn’t pretend that a little invasion of privacy was what truly mattered. What mattered was that Alara was facing a choice: she could either raise the alarm and go back to her old life as a counselor, or she could embrace what Wasp was offering. She could join her conspiracy, and plumb the depths of her own, twisted desires.

That prospect should have horrified her. It should have, but as she contemplated, Alara realized something alarming: she didn’t care. Not about the *Inyx*, or the Alliance, or Captain Vasser, or anyone else on the crew. She just didn’t. What had they ever done except take her presence for granted? This wasn’t about them. This was about Alara, and what she wanted.

“It’s your choice,” Wasp told her. “I’m offering you a chance. It’s up to you what happens to poor Hannah here... at least, in a way. Not like she’s going to get her own mind back. No; if you don’t want to have fun with her, then maybe I should enjoy a little taste instead.”

As she spoke, Wasp took the point of Hannah Weiss’s chin between her thumb and forefinger, and tilted it up and to the side until Hannah was facing her. Then, as Wasp leaned in, her hardlight holographic body subtly flickered and changed, and her eyes started to fill with bright, bleeding, pulsing spirals that were being projected out from within.

For the first time, Weiss seemed to respond to something. Acting on some deeply-conditioned reflex, her eyes fixed on the spirals in Wasp's and shot wide, as if she was drinking in their eerie, mind-altering light. Her face reflected those spinning colors and she started leaning in, swaying like a drunk, her lips perilously close to Wasp's. Alara still couldn't fathom exactly what Wasp had done to her, but clearly it was potent. There was no mistaking the fact that Wasp was inside Weiss's head, and could do absolutely anything she wanted with the helpless, brainwashed crewman.

"Stop!" Alara barked. She was at her limit.

The spirals vanished from Wasp's eyes and she turned to look at Alara instead, an expression of gleeful malice writ large on her face. "Oh? And why should I?"

Alara met Wasp's gaze. There was only one answer. "Because she's mine."

Wasp threw back her head and laughed. Then, she stood up and straight and walked over to Alara. "Welcome aboard, shrink."

Alara nodded curtly. Getting into bed with someone like Wasp was still an uneasy proposition, and she remained more than a little shocked at her own feelings. But there was one thing she knew for certain: she couldn't go back.

That left her only one option. But it wouldn't be unpleasant, at least. Alara had set aside an entire hour for her session with Weiss. She still had thirty minutes left. A smile came to her face as she thought about all the things she was going to be able to do to that girl's head in thirty minutes.

And, of course, in the follow-up sessions they were going to schedule.

“I’ll leave you to enjoy yourself in a moment.” Wasp nodded approvingly at the smile on Alara’s face. She knew that look well. “But first, just one thing: let’s talk about what we’d like you to do to Lieutenant Kuznetzov.”

CHAPTER EIGHT

“You’re telling me...” Lieutenant Kuznetzov said slowly.
“There’s... really nothing going on? No conspiracy? Nothing to worry about? It... was all in my head?”

“All in your head,” Counselor Alara Hisarlik replied, placing careful emphasis on those words. “It’s as I’ve told you. I know this may be difficult to accept, but I’ve been investigating thoroughly over the past two weeks. Your fears that the crew of this ship are being manipulated or infiltrated in some way are entirely unfounded.”

“I see,” Lieutenant Kuznetzov muttered. “Thank you.”

She was grateful, wasn’t she? After all, this was what she’d been hoping to hear, wasn’t it? It was the best possible outcome. A few mental health issues aside, there was nothing to worry about. The *Inyx* wasn’t in danger. She should be relieved.

So why, instead, was Lieutenant Kuznetzov finding it so hard to accept?

Maybe it was how bad things had gotten. More than ever, Lieutenant Kuznetzov was sure something was up. So many members of the crew were behaving strangely - the science officer, the ship’s doctor, even the captain. Every time she entered a room, Kuznetzov was greeted with eerie silences and glassy stares, as if there was some sinister secret that everyone but her was in on.

Paranoia? It was possible, of course. But Lieutenant Kuznetzov would never have made second-in-command if her instincts weren't worth a damn, and they were telling her that something was terribly, terribly wrong.

"What's wrong?" Alara prompted. "You seem troubled, Lieutenant."

Or perhaps it was Alara Hisarlik.

She'd changed. Hadn't she? There was something different about her. Lieutenant Kuznetzov just couldn't quite seem to put her finger on it. She seemed... what was it? Calmer? Happier? More confident? Yes, all of those. But those were good things. Weren't they?

So why did Lieutenant Kuznetzov suddenly feel so uneasy around her?

Maybe it was her cabin. Two weeks ago, it had felt warm. Inviting. Since then, the counselor had redecorated, stripping back much of that pleasant decor in favor of a far more spartan vibe. It wasn't bad, exactly. Just about every cabin on a warship like the *Inyx* could be called 'spartan'. But the difference was palpable.

Or maybe it was nothing. Maybe it was all in Lieutenant Kuznetzov's head.

"I'm just..." Lieutenant Kuznetzov confessed. "I can't shake the feeling that... Look, are you sure? Absolutely certain?"

"Certain," Alara insisted, as she took a sip of her tea. Somehow, her icy calm wasn't comforting. "Completely. It's all in your head."

"I... see." Lieutenant Kuznetzov found herself unconvinced, and

it was clear that she wasn't going to get any answers here. She made to stand up. "In that case, counselor, I'll try to put it out of my mind. My apologies for wasting your-"

"No, sit."

Lieutenant Kuznetzov was so surprised, she found herself sinking back down into her seat. Alara Hisarlik wasn't usually one to give orders - certainly not with that kind of steel in her voice. She sounded more like Captain Vasser than she did her usual, mild-mannered self.

"Excuse me?" the lieutenant said.

"What kind of counselor would I bet if I just let you walk out of here?" Alara tutted. She was smiling - it was meant to be warm, perhaps. Comforting. It didn't come across that way. "Lieutenant Kuznetzov, I'm deeply concerned for your mental well-being. Paranoid delusions, anxiety, uncertainty... we really must get to the bottom of this."

Lieutenant Kuznetzov flinched. She hadn't been prepared for such bluntness. "Perhaps you're right," she admitted.

Painful though it was to face up to it, her conviction that something was amiss aboard the *Inyx* was entirely undercut by her lack of evidence. Put another way... yes, she really did sound paranoid. She couldn't blame the ship's counselor for being firm when the moment called for it, she decided.

"Of course I am." Alara laughed. "I'm an expert. Now, please, get comfortable. We may need a little time."

She reached over to a small, wooden jewelry box that was resting on a nearby table. From within, the counselor produced what Lieutenant Kuzentzov just about recognized from historical

photographs as a watch - the old, analog kind, worn in a pocket and attached by a chain. This one was gold, it seemed, with fine Roman numerals around the face, and when she strained her ears, the lieutenant could just about hear it tick.

“Do you know what this is?” Alara asked, touching the watch fondly. Her eyes were fixed on it.

“A family heirloom?” Lieutenant Kuznetsov guessed. From how she handled it, it was clear the pocket watch was of great significance to the counselor.

Alara just laughed, though. “Not at all!” she exclaimed, voice rich with humor. “It’s just a replica. I had the ship’s computer fabricate it for me recently. But it’s based on something I saw in an old movie, while I was growing up. I remember being quite fascinated with it. It really awakened some things in me. Things I hadn’t thought about in years - until very recently, in fact.”

Lieutenant Kuznetsov shifted uncomfortably. How was this related to her counseling?

“Anyway.” With a flourish, Alara lifted the watch into the air and dangled it by its chain as she sat back in her chair. “I’d like you to look at this, please.”

“Why?” Lieutenant Kuznetsov asked, although she was already looking. The pocket watch had a way of catching the eye.

“Because I told you to.”

The lieutenant blinked. She couldn’t tell if Alara was joking.

“An external visual focus can often be conducive to the kind of mental state we want you to achieve in therapy,” Alara explained

after a moment. "That's why. But you really must trust me, lieutenant. We won't get very far if you keep asking 'why' like a precocious child. I know what I'm doing. Trust that your welfare is my highest priority."

Lieutenant Kuznetsov felt her choler rise at the reprimand, but she quickly reasoned herself out of anger. Alara had a point. She was the ship's counselor. It was natural to think that she knew what she was doing, and that she had the lieutenant's best interests at heart. Alara was probably a little offended she kept questioning her. Maybe Lieutenant Kuznetsov should try being a little more cooperative. After all, if she really was paranoid, she certainly needed Alara's help.

And if there really was some kind of conspiracy afoot, and if - as her instincts were telling her - Alara was now part of it?

Lieutenant Kuznetsov shook that thought off. It was all in her head.

"You're right," she said, after taking a few deep breaths. "My apologies."

"Thank you." Alara nodded. "Now, please. The watch. Look closely."

Obediently, Lieutenant Kuznetsov turned her full attention to the pocket watch. She wasn't really sure what else she was meant to do besides simply looking. It was nice to look at, she supposed. The watch was pretty, and there was something pleasing about the perfect regularity of the second hand as it moved around the face. It was impressive to think about how, in the pre-electronic age, humanity had been completely dependent on clockwork pieces like this to tell the time with any precision. A fine pocket watch must have held an almost godlike sway over people, simply by counting the minutes and keeping them to schedule.

“Yes, good,” Alara cooed, “keep your eyes focused right in the middle there. Let yourself be aware of the hands moving without looking straight at them.”

It took Lieutenant Kuznetzov a few minutes to slip into that particular mental groove. At first, her attention kept wandering - and with it, her gaze. It was so easy to find herself following the tip of the second hand instead, as it moved in a circle around the watch's face. But deep breathing helped - it was just like reentry training, she told herself - and so did letting her eyes half-unfocus until the ticking of the pocket watch seemed to be happening in a blur all around her.

“OK,” Lieutenant Kuznetzov said eventually. She felt strange. Sleepy, almost. Maybe she was more exhausted than she realized.

“Good,” Alara repeated. “You’re doing very well, Lieutenant. Think of this as a meditation exercise. We’re doing this so that we can communicate with your subconscious mind. That’s where we can find the source of your trauma.”

Lieutenant Kuznetzov frowned - or at least, she tried to. Her face seemed strangely unresponsive to her emotions. Her trauma? That didn't sound right. But... why? She wasn't sure. Her thoughts were slow. It was proving surprisingly easy to slip into a kind of meditative stupor as she stared at Alara's watch.

“Yes, trauma.” Alara seemed to register the lieutenant's skepticism.

The older woman started to swing the pocket watch back and forth like a pendulum. At first, Lieutenant Kuznetzov felt faintly annoyed, but she quickly found she could stay focused on it regardless. Her eyes moved back and forth, matching the watch's rhythm, and she leaned forward a little, eager to bring all her concentration to bear on the object.

“We all have trauma,” Alara explained. Her voice was very slow - or maybe the lieutenant just heard it that way. Everything seemed slow to her now. “Every one of us. It shapes us, even though we may not realize it. We carry it around inside us all the time.” Past the watch, Lieutenant Kuznetsov could just about make out a wide grin dawning on Alara’s face. “Or, as in your case, we wear it on our sleeves.”

What did she mean by that? Lieutenant Kuznetsov found that her skepticism had already sunk into the quicksand of her entranced mind. Now, she was simply eager to understand. Alara’s words had an irresistible power to them. They were compelling, and she could sense that on some level, she was just as focused on them as she was on the watch.

“You know what I’m talking about,” Alara told her. “I’m talking about how you present yourself. About this aesthetic of tough, strong, butch masculinity you insist on presenting.”

Lieutenant Kuznetsov’s blood suddenly ran cold. “The... my... what are you...”

What was she talking about? Clearly, it was some kind of reference to Lieutenant Kuznetsov being butch. But what did that have to do with anything? She’d always been a butch lesbian. She was perfectly comfortable with her identity. Her butchness had nothing to do with her present feelings.

Right?

Suddenly, Lieutenant Kuznetsov wasn’t so sure. Her usual reserves of will and confidence were lost in the fog. And Alara seemed very, very certain.

“Don’t you see?” The counselor’s voice was stronger than ever. There was a rich pleasure to it, like she was finally, truly alive, even

as Alara sat back in her big, comfortable chair, the perfect picture of calm and assurance. "It's deeply connected. Your butchness. Your paranoia. They share a root in your psyche."

"N-no..." Lieutenant Kuznetsov murmured. A murmur was all she could muster. She felt so weak. If only she could look away from the pocket watch... but she couldn't, she had to keep looking.

Who had told her that again?

It was all so confusing. The lieutenant was losing track. All she could remember was that she needed to keep staring. Then, everything would become clear. Yes. She was sure of that.

"Don't worry, dear," Alara insisted. "It's all going to be OK. All you need to do is listen to me."

Lieutenant Kuznetsov shook her head numbly. She couldn't shake the feeling that she was about to lose something precious to her. "S-stop."

"We can't stop," Alara said patiently, like she was talking to a child. "Not while you're still so confused. Don't you see the connection? The way you present yourself is like a barrier between you and your colleagues. It keeps you apart. Alone. And now you've concocted this fantasy about a conspiracy in order to reinforce those barriers. You'd be much happier without them, you know."

"No," Lieutenant Kuznetsov repeated. She was finding her voice again. With great effort, she was able to rouse herself a little. She needed to put a stop to this. Right now. "That... is not..."

"Come now," Alara cooed. "It's trauma. All of it. How else do you explain those forced-feminization fantasies of yours?"

At that, Lieutenant Kuznetsov froze. She was paralyzed. Her resistance evaporated into the ether. The sheer shock robbed her of it.

How did she know? How did she know about that?

"A new... friend of mine was showing me your holodeck files," Alara tutted. "I'm afraid that's not a very healthy outlet, lieutenant. Can't you see it? This twisted little fetish of yours is simply your true self, begging to be set free."

Lieutenant Kuznetsov was too stunned to argue. Too stunned to react. Too stunned to do anything but accept the words Alara was pouring into her hypnotized ear.

"Yes, we really must address this," Alara mused. Her grin was overwhelmingly sinister, but Lieutenant Kuznetsov was too far gone to see it. She had eyes only for the pocket watch. "We'll have to go deep. I'm sure you have some repressed memories that can shed light on this. Listen to me, lieutenant. Let me tell you all about it. Let me show you what, exactly, you need to remember."

Lieutenant Kuznetsov slumped forward in dumb, mindless acceptance. She was completely hypnotized. Her mind was an open book - and Alara Hisarlik its author, as she spoke a new, twisted truth that turned the lieutenant's identity on its head.

* * *

"For my records," Alara dictated to her holocorder, "this is week two, session four of my feminine adjustment therapy with Lieutenant Kuznetsov."

Lieutenant Kuznetsov squirmed at the name Alara had chosen to give it.

By now, these sessions had become familiar. As usual, Lieutenant Kuznetsov sat, hunched and uncertain, in Alara's cabin while the counselor helped her. As ever, Alara was supremely at ease. She sat back in her chair, tall and formidable, teacup in one hand and notepad in the other, and regarded the lieutenant with an unpleasantly piercing gaze.

In truth, the whole experience was unpleasant. But Lieutenant Kuznetsov had no choice but to go through with it. Because...

She frowned. There was a reason, wasn't there?

Of course there was.

"So, Lieutenant," Alara began, "how have you been feeling since our last session?"

"I've been well." Lieutenant Kuznetsov immediately flinched at how uncertain she sounded. "I think."

"You think?" Alara raised an eyebrow. "Tell me about that."

The counselor sounded so forceful. So imperious. That wasn't right, was it? Lieutenant Kuznetsov was growing increasingly sure of it. There was something off about Alara Hisarlik. With each session, Lieutenant Kuznetsov was more and more certain.

But... was that simply her paranoia talking?

She wanted to raise the issue with the captain. But her therapy was too important to jeopardize.

"It's been... a little distracting," Lieutenant Kuznetsov confessed.

“Ah.” Alara’s smile widened. Became predatory. “Then, you’ve been following the instructions I gave you?”

Lieutenant Kuznetzov nodded curtly, and tried to hide how much she was suddenly blushing.

“Wonderful.” Alara’s voice was slow and gleeful. “Show me.”

Lieutenant Kuznetzov sucked in a breath so hard she almost choked. “C-counselor!” she gasped. “That wouldn’t be... I can’t... t-that’s inappropriate!”

As soon as Alara started shaking her head, though, Lieutenant Kuznetzov felt her conviction beginning to wilt.

“Lieutenant,” Alara tutted. Condescension dripped from her words. “Be reasonable. How am I supposed to supervise your therapy if I can’t inspect your progress?”

Lieutenant Kuznetzov shrank back. Her therapy. Right. It was all-important, and Alara was the only one she could trust with it. She knew that, somehow. There was no room to argue.

“V-very well,” the butch woman muttered. “H-here.”

Alara watched her carefully over the rim of her teacup as Lieutenant Kuznetzov rose to her feet. After a long moment of hesitation and with great reluctance, the lieutenant presented herself for inspection. She unbuttoned her smart jacket halfway down its front, and at the same time shucked her uniform pants down beneath her hips.

Doing so made her blush fiercely. It felt obscene. Like she was flashing someone. And the worst part was that now there was something for them to see.

Instead of her usual sports bra and boxers, beneath her uniform, Lieutenant Kuznetsov was wearing bright pink lingerie.

It was an assignment from the counselor. Alara had even picked out the bra and panties for her. They were so humiliatingly eye-catching, especially for a butch. So lacy. So thin. So damn frilly, with those needless little bows and floral embellishments.

It was exactly like what Lieutenant Kuznetsov wore in all her worst fantasies.

“Perfect,” Alara purred. “You look lovely in them, by the way. Very cute.”

A sudden rush of heat turned Lieutenant Kuznetsov’s thoughts to ash and her voice into a girlish squeak. “T-t-thank you.”

She slumped back into the chair and hid her face. Why did she have to find that so hot?

“I suppose you haven’t worn anything like this in... how long?” Alara asked.

“S-since I was a teenager,” Lieutenant Kuznetsov managed.

“Almost exactly as long as you’ve had this fetish,” Alara noted. “Telling, don’t you think?”

Lieutenant Kuznetsov balled her hands into fists and said nothing.

What could she say? Somebody else knowing about her feminization fetish was a nightmare come to life. She’d always tried her hardest to excuse it to herself. To insist that it was nothing - just

a harmless little quirk of her psychology; a little bit of unprocessed trauma that came to the fore, sometimes, when she was in a certain mood.

So what if thinking about someone forcing her to dress like a femme got her off harder than anything else? That didn't mean anything.

That was what she'd always told herself. In her late teenage years, Lieutenant Kuznetsov had discovered that dressing in an androgynous or even masculine fashion made her feel good. It completely addressed the uneasy feeling she got in her gut whenever she wore a skirt or a dress. Her newfound butchness went hand-in-hand with her realization that she was a lesbian, and as a butch, she'd found a place in the community.

But slowly, over time, her fetish for feminization had grown inside her like a tainted seed. In her mind's eye, that unease with femininity had been steadily transformed from disdain into a kind of sick thrill, the need for which she couldn't satiate anywhere else. Trying to clamp down on it completely hadn't worked, so Lieutenant Kuznetsov had resorted to indulging it little by little, in masturbatory fantasies or holodeck scenarios. Throughout her military career, it had remained her naughty little secret, never to be revealed or disclosed.

The secrecy made it feel even more shameful. But Lieutenant Kuznetsov had achieved a kind of peace with the fact that she was more than just a fetish. What got her off didn't dictate her identity. It didn't undermine who she was. It didn't undermine her butchness. That was what she'd always thought.

Alara had shown her otherwise.

"You see? You've learned to eroticize your own femininity, even as you keep it at arm's length," Alara explained for her again. "It's a

symptom of your deep longing for a reconciliation with it. We need to demystify it for you, lieutenant.” She tilted her head to one side. “And yet, you’ve been finding this distracting?”

Lieutenant Kuznetsov flinched again. Why did Alara have to look at her like that? Her gaze made it so damn hard to think, and even harder to lie.

“I get...” she confessed in a whisper, “t-turned on.”

“And there it is.” Alara’s vindication was audible. “Well. Clearly, we need to go a little deeper.”

A chain jangled. Lieutenant Kuznetsov looked up. The counselor’s pocket watch was hanging in the air between them.

She let out a low groan. She hated this part. Whenever the watch came out, she seemed to get so confused. It robbed her of the ability to stand up for herself. To assert herself and her identity. Already, she could feel the room around her beginning to swim and spin as her eyes locked onto the center of the pocket watch.

“Please...” Lieutenant Kuznetsov tried to say. “Can’t we... do we really have to...”

“Yes, lieutenant,” Alara scolded. “We do. Focus, now. You know how this works.”

Without really meaning to, Lieutenant Kuznetsov nodded in submission. That response had been conditioned into her now. Obediently, she stared into the watch and let its rhythmic ticking take her away from herself.

“How about your other homework?” Alara asked as she began to swing the pocket watch from side to side. “Did you cut your hair?”

This time, Lieutenant Kuznetsov couldn't even flinch. It was like all the strength had gone out of her body. "N-no," she replied distantly.

Every single week, for years now, Lieutenant Kuznetsov had made sure to get her hair trimmed back so that her neat, short side shave remained perfect. But not this week.

She was dreading the moment someone else on the crew noticed.

"Good," Alara told her soothingly. "Good girl."

Lieutenant Kuznetsov moaned softly. She hated being called that.

Unless she didn't. Unless the fluttering in her stomach meant something else. Thanks to Alara, she wasn't sure.

"Let's go a little deeper," Alara said, as Lieutenant Kuznetsov started to slip into trance. "A little deeper into your mind. A little deeper into this fetish of yours. We need to get to the root, lieutenant."

Lieutenant Kuznetsov nodded, the movement barely perceptible. Yes. They needed to get to the root.

"The root of your paranoia," Alara continued, songlike. "The root of your masculine presentation. It's the same, lieutenant. But don't worry. We can fix them both."

"But..." Lieutenant Kuznetsov managed to say, as something within her stirred. "That's not... I'm... butch...?"

She was a butch lesbian. That was her identity. That was who she

was.

That was what Lieutenant Kuznetsov wanted to say. But her thoughts were sludge, and she could barely muster words. And besides, she was feeling less and less sure of her identity by the day. After all, wasn't it just something she'd adopted to keep people at arms' length? Wasn't that the reason she was currently so worried about the ship and the crew?

Alara had taught her that. Now Lieutenant Kuznetsov didn't know what to think.

"We'll see about that," Alara laughed, brushing past the lieutenant's feeble resistance like it wasn't even there. "Don't worry, lieutenant. Counseling is all about discovering who you really are. That's all we're doing here. Sometimes, the truth can be surprising - but that's why I'm here to help you come to terms with it. You have nothing to worry about."

"Oh..."

Lieutenant Kuznetsov's shoulders slumped. She couldn't think clearly enough to find any fault with what Alara was telling her.

She had nothing to worry about.

But didn't she? Wasn't this all terribly wrong? Once again, the lieutenant found herself wondering: what if Alara was part of the conspiracy she suspected? What if Lieutenant Kuznetsov had accidentally fallen into their clutches? What if this twisted form of therapy was simply part of their plan?

In the end, it didn't matter. As she stared at the pocket watch, those thoughts vanished little by little - and soon, she was left mindless, thoughtless, and free of doubt.

Perfectly hypnotized.

“Very good,” Alara cooed. Her voice was unmistakably sinister, but Lieutenant Kuznetzov was beyond hearing it. “Now, lieutenant, I think it’s about time we talk about the way you refer to yourself. Always by rank. It’s so stiff, don’t you think? And ‘Semya’ is such a pretty, girly name.”

Lieutenant Kuznetzov had always hated it. But after a few minutes of listening to Alara, she realized that in truth, she felt very differently.

* * *

“For my records,” Alara recited, “this is week four, session nine of my feminine adjustment therapy with... Semya.”

She said the name with such vicious softness, it made Semya squirm. Why did simply hearing her own name make her so wet?

“So tell me, lieutenant.” Already, Alara was holding her pocket watch, playing with it between her fingers. Even that had Semya transfixed. “How have you been doing lately?”

Semya managed to peel her gaze away from the watch and did her best to glare fiercely at the counselor. She knew, though, that the effect was hopelessly undermined by her long mascara and the dainty, pink lipstick that always seemed to make her lips pouty. Semya knew exactly what she looked like. She’d certainly spent long enough staring at herself in the mirror that morning.

And touching herself.

She couldn’t help it. She was a slave to her fetish. It had taken over her entire life. But at the same time, Semya knew she had a

responsibility to the *Inyx* and its crew. She was certain of it now: there was a conspiracy afoot, and Alara Hisarlik was part of it. She was helping someone take over the ship using some form of mind control, and she needed to be stopped.

Semya was going to stop her. Soon.

She just needed to complete her therapy first. She might not have been able to trust Alara with anything else - but her therapy? She could count on Alara Hisarlik for that.

Semya's forehead started to throb. She scowled at the pain. That happened a lot. It was like something deep inside her brain was begging her to remember.

But... remember what?

Everything was so foggy these days, but Semya could at least keep a few key details straight in her head. She was investigating Alara Hisarlik and the threat she posed to the ship, but she also needed the duplicitous counselor's help to deal with her overbearing feminization fetish. She needed this therapy, or else she'd...

What?

Semya wasn't quite sure. She just knew it was important. Very, very important.

Somehow.

Semya wasn't sure why her head hurt. It was, admittedly, strange that she needed the help of someone she suspected of working to brainwash the crew. Paradoxical, even. But that was simply the predicament she found herself in. Wasn't it?

And given the state she was in, it was hard to deny that she needed help.

“Semya?” Alara prompted. Semya realized she’d lapsed into confused silence. “Tell me. How have you been doing?”

“Not well,” Semya growled. It hurt to admit it, especially to Alara, but there was no point in lying. Not in therapy. “I’m always distracted. And...”

“Turned on?” The corners of Alara’s smile turned upwards.

Semya looked down. “Y-yes.”

Little by little, under Alara’s guidance, she’d been reshaping her aesthetic. Her hair was now almost mid-length, she wore make-up every day, and she’d switched to a more feminine cut for her uniform. And, of course, there was the lingerie.

“Better than before?” Alara asked, although she sounded like she already knew the answer. “Or worse?”

Semya grit her teeth. “Worse. Much worse.”

Her new, feminine look put her in a permanent state of arousal that left Semya all but incapable of attending to her duties properly. It was a miracle that Captain Vasser hadn’t noticed. Even now, Semya could feel herself soaking through her lace panties.

“My,” Alara remarked, with cold, sadistic glee plain on her face. “How interesting. Clearly, we need to go even further.”

Semya almost nodded in instinctive agreement before she realized how absurd that sounded.

“But...” she said slowly. Her head got even foggier whenever she considered resisting Alara. “If it’s getting worse then... shouldn’t we... s-stop?”

Alara just laughed at her. “Silly girl!” she replied. Semya moaned. “These conditions often get worse before they get better. We mustn’t stop now. Understand?”

“But...”

Before another word could pass Semya’s lips, the cabin’s dim, cold lights glinted off the gold surface of Alara’s pocket watch as she turned it over between her fingers. At once, Semya was stunned into silence. Her eyes turned glassy and foggy.

She could hear it again. The ticking. It drowned out her very thoughts.

“Understand?” Alara pressed.

Semya nodded dumbly. “Yes, Alara,” she said, because she knew that was what she was supposed to say.

“Good girl.”

Semya moaned again. Being called things like that drove her crazy. There was no quenching her arousal. Touching herself wasn’t even close to enough, but she was desperate to all the same. She began to rub her legs together pathetically.

Alara seized on that at once.

“You see?” the counselor tutted. “You poor girl. You simply can’t control yourself. You can’t possibly go on like this. We need to get to the root of your fetish.”

As she spoke, she lifted her pocket watch and started to slowly, lazily swing it in the air between them. That was all it took to keep Semya's resistance utterly smothered.

"Yes, Alara," she said thickly.

"We need to release your femininity," Alara told her, malice woven through her voice. "To let you embrace it. To let you relish in it."

Distantly, Semya was aware that that was the last thing she wanted. Hadn't she always wanted to rid herself of this embarrassing little kink? To keep it hidden? Not to let it run her life.

But somehow, the thought just wouldn't form.

"Yes, Alara."

She slumped deeper into her chair. As she stared numbly at the pocket watch, a bubble of drool formed at the corner of her mouth.

"Very good." Alara's grin widened still further. She was nothing like her former self. The counselor was utterly transformed by power and confidence, into something completely sinister. "In fact, I think you're ready for the final step. For your big debut. For your next session, in three days, I'll book the holodeck for us. I have something very special planned for us."

"Yes, Alara."

After a long moment, a faint sense of terror forced its way to the forefront of Semya's hypnotized mind. However suppressed and misdirected they were, the lieutenant's instincts weren't completely gone. Not yet. Eventually, the terror crystallized into a specific

concern.

“Alara,” Semya drooled, very slowly, as she stared vacantly into the counselor’s pocket watch. “You’re... you’re not... doing something... to me. Are... are you?”

Alara just smiled. “Of course not,” the older woman said, and kept swinging the pocket watch. “Put it out of your mind, Semya.”

Against her wishes, Semya did. And then, once her mind was completely empty, Alara explained exactly how she was going to destroy Semya’s tough, butch exterior once and for all.

CHAPTER NINE

The holodeck couldn't recreate smells, but all the same, Semya thought that she could taste stale tobacco in the air as she and Alara walked down the narrow, hardlight alleyway, between buildings that were made of nothing more than photons and data. Semya wrinkled her nose at the phantom stench, but in truth it was a pleasant distraction from other aspects of her situation.

It didn't last. The holodeck was extremely capable of creating local temperature adjustments, and the biting cold of the simulated night air on Semya's bare legs was a constant, unpleasant, forcefully arousing reminder of what she was wearing.

"Are you ready?" Alara asked her.

Semya flashed her a jealous look. Unlike her, Alara Hisarlik was wrapped up in a long, fine, warm coat. Why did Semya have to be so uncomfortable? What sense did it make for her to be dressed in such a humiliating way, while her therapist was comfortable and dignified? What kind of therapy was this, anyway?

Semya thought about voicing that question, but she couldn't seem to muster the focus. Instead, she just found herself saying:

"Yes, Alara."

"Good." There it was again; that wide, unwholesome grin that

had Semya convinced the counselor was bad news. “We’re here.”

She gestured to the building they had just arrived outside: a grubby little hole of a dyke bar, charmingly named ‘The Scissors’.

Semya knew it well. It was a perfect, holographic recreation of the real deal, a bar that Semya had gone cruising at often enough during her stints of shore leave on Earth. She’d actually built the simulation herself, although she’d never quite plucked up the shameless daring to go through with any of the deep, dark fantasies that had motivated it.

But now, thanks to Alara, that was about to change. And Semya was about to experience The Scissors in a very, very different way.

Just thinking about that made Semya whimper. She could already feel herself dripping down her leg.

“Don’t be nervous,” Alara cooed. “This is simply the culmination of your therapy, Semya. The final push. It’s what you need to finally break through your own walls and barriers.”

Semya nodded in instinctive submission. The final push. After this, she’d be cured. Cured of the messed-up, embarrassing fetish that had kept her holed up in her cabin touching herself all day long ever since their last session.

Then she could alert the captain and the rest of the crew. She could save the Inyx. She’d have Alara Hisarlik in the brig. She just needed to be cured.

Semya frowned for a moment as she tried to remember why, exactly, what they were doing was so important to her therapy. Her head started to hurt. The memories wouldn’t form. How had she ended up here? Why was she doing this?

She couldn't remember. When she tried, she just found herself picturing Alara's pocket watch.

Alara was doing something to her. Definitely. Something sinister. Semya was sure of it, and it terrified her.

But before she could come to terms with that, she needed to be cured.

"I understand," she whimpered softly.

"Then," Alara said, licking her lips and reaching out to open the door to the lesbian bar, "let's get started."

Before Semya could brace herself, Alara rested a hand on her back and pushed Semya through the door.

It was loud inside the bar, but as soon as the door closed behind the two of them, a distinctive hush washed through the space as conversations fell silent and heads turned, punctuated only by the scraping of barstools as every single patron craned to look at Semya Kuznetzov.

Semya's cheeks turned bright red. She knew those looks. She knew what she was to them.

Fresh meat.

The Scissors might have been a filthy dive bar, but there was a kind of etiquette to the place that was as rigid as any military discipline. The way the bar worked was that dominant, butch women hung out and drank, and if any submissive, feminine girls wanted some action, all they had to do was walk through the door and pick who got to buy her a drink.

In the past, Semya had always been one of the butches. Not anymore. And now she was learning how all those femmes had always felt, staring down all these hungry, cocky, lustful stares.

Someone wolf-whistled. A moan slipped out of Semya's lips.

It was little wonder that everybody was staring. Semya was dressed in the outfit Alara had picked out for the occasion - and it was beyond even her wildest fantasies. A metallic, gold minidress, cut tight to her figure, but ruched so that each of its folds caught the light and attracted attention to Semya's physique. She felt she didn't have the figure for a dress like that, but from the looks she was getting, the bar's patrons disagreed.

In one hand, Semya was clutching a tiny purse Alara had given her to hold her badge. Alara had given her a necklace, too: a woven little gold chain that hung down as if pointing the way to her exposed cleavage. And then there was her makeup: under Alara's stern instruction, Semya had been practicing, and in a few weeks she'd become skilled enough to give herself a perfect complexion, full, vibrant lips, striking eyeliner, and deep, sultry eyeshadow. But Alara had insisted on a heavy hand. The colors were a little too lurid; the pronounced blush and bright lipstick looked slutty instead of simply pretty, and the way she'd used bright pink instead of a deeper red ensured the resulting look was girlish rather than womanly.

All in all, with her mid-length hair, she looked just like a freshly-turned femme looking to get fucked like a princess for the first time.

And it was desperately, humiliatingly hot to know that, in a way, that was exactly what she was.

The crowning humiliation was the tall, dainty, heels Alara had forced her to wear. Semya stumbled like a newborn faun as Alara pushed her a few paces deeper into the bar.

“Go on,” Alara jeered. The rich pleasure in her voice was unmistakable. “Time to take your medicine, lieutenant.”

Semya let out a plaintive little whine. She had never been so turned on. The outfit was bad enough, but now, feeling dozens of pairs of eyes roving over her body, Semya was completely robbed of the ability to form words. Her head was full of steam. She couldn’t think.

“Does...” she whimpered eventually. “D-does it really... have to be... t-them?”

She gestured at the bar’s patrons. They were all dressed for the part, but each and every one of the patrons’ faces was familiar to Semya - because they were holograms of the *Inyx*’s crew.

“Oh yes,” Alara insisted, giggling. “Private therapy is merely the beginning. To complete your counseling, you need to be properly socialized into your new, feminine social role.

Hearing that didn’t make thinking any easier.

“B-but,” Semya tried to say, “I t-thought... b-but you said...”

She was supposed to go back to normal after this, wasn’t she? She’d be free of her fetish. She’d be able to go back to being butch. Wasn’t that the whole idea?

Semya wasn’t sure anymore. She just couldn’t think. Why couldn’t she think?

“You have to feel seen,” Alara assured her. “By people familiar to you.”

Semya felt seen. She’d never imagined that people would see so

much of her. It was as mortifying as it was hot.

For years, she'd had fantasies just like this.

"Go on." Alara nudged her forwards. "Give them a show."

Hesitantly but obediently, Semya started walking along the length of the bar.

"They're... just holograms," Semya muttered to herself under her breath. A reminder. Alara had promised. The counselor had created this scenario for her. Nobody else here was an actual person. But they seemed so real. "Just... just holograms."

It didn't help. Every one of those amused smirks and lustful stares was written into Semya's body. They were like burning hot coals on her skin. She could feel her legs turning to jelly beneath her - but all the same, she found herself trying her best to obey Alara's command. As Semya walked, clumsily putting one heel in front of the other, fighting to maintain balance, she tried to make her hips sway appealingly with each step in that hypnotically alluring way femmes always seemed to manage.

For just a moment, she managed it - but then, a harsh spike of shameful arousal made Semya stumble wildly.

Until someone caught her.

Semya gasped at the sensation of a rough hand clamping tight around her bare forearm and hauling her back to her feet.

"Careful there, princess," said someone, voice full of a familiar swagger. "Let's at least get a drink or two in you before you go spreading your legs like that."

Laughter rippled through the room. Semya had to bury her face in her hands to hide her blush. She wasn't used to this - to being dressed this way, to being desired, to feeling pursued, any of it. In that moment, what left her tongue-tied the most was just how fragile she felt as this woman - a short-haired butch who worked in engineering, Semya thought - grabbed her and pulled her around.

Fragility. That was new. And it put butterflies in Semya's stomach.

"C'mon now," the engineer teased. "Don't I even get a 'thank you'?"

"Thank you," rose instantly to Semya's lips in a flustered, mortified squeak.

A fresh round of laughter rendered her speechless again. Semya was startled by just how high and feminine her voice came out.

"You're welcome," the engineer replied, grinning. "Has anyone ever told you that your voice is just as pretty as your face?"

Semya saw white for a moment.

Pretty?

That was the last thing Semya ever expected to be called. The last thing she wanted to be called.

And yet she couldn't keep a dumb, shy smile from coming to her face.

"Y'know," someone else piped up, "I don't think she has."

More laughter.

“I’m always happy to take a pretty girl’s first time,” the engineer winked. “Why don’t you let me buy you a drink, princess?”

“P-p-princess?” Semya squeaked. She was used to using lines like that, not having them used on it. It was wrong. It was mortifying. And yet, her body was reacting to it all with supreme eagerness. Each word, each laugh, was a fresh rush of heat across her skin.

She was too flustered to form a reply, but that didn’t seem to matter to the engineer who was currently hitting on her. She was still holding Semya by the arm and used it to guide her over towards where she’d been sitting at the bar. Semya followed meekly. Struggle was beyond her. She was a leaf in the wind.

A small crowd of women, all eager for a piece of the new girl, quickly formed around her.

“So,” the engineer asked, “what do you like to drink?”

Semya was grateful for such a simple question. “I’ll h-have a beer,” she replied automatically.

The chorus of laughter that prompted was louder than ever.

“Aren’t you cute?” the engineer laughed derisively. She held up her hand to get the bartender’s attention. “White wine spritzer for the lady!”

The lady. The humiliation was unbearable. Semya squirmed from the treasonous pleasure that gave her.

Why? Why was this getting to her so much? Semya had always liked feeling strong. Hard. Tough. Feeling strong was comfortable. It suited her. That’s what she’d always thought. In a way, that simple

feeling had guided her entire aesthetic. Her identity. Feeling weak? Fragile? Delicate? That was wrong. It made her stomach flutter. It made her feel the way a zero-G-to-atmosphere spacedive made her feel.

And now she was trapped with that feeling of falling. Every look, every whispered comment, every sleazy flirt made it grip her anew. And as the minutes wore on, it was being transformed into a kind of panicked euphoria that robbed all the thoughts from Semya's head and sent giddy endorphins pounding through her body.

She wished she hated it. But she didn't. It felt amazing. It was just the way it always was in her fantasies, only the reality of it made it a hundred times more intense.

No. Not reality, she reminded herself. Holograms. These were just holograms.

"So," the engineer said easily, "what do you call yourself, princess?"

"Don't let her keep you all to herself," someone interrupted, sidling up to Semya on the other side and saving her from even deeper embarrassment. She recognized them too. One of Carter's people. A security officer. "And don't let her talk your ear off all night either. I know you're not here for talk."

"I..." Semya tried to protest, "I'm..."

She stopped when she realized how unconvincing any protest would sound, given her clothes.

"You should try talking for once," the engineer said to the security officer. "Some girls like it when they know your name before you try getting your hand in their panties."

“Not sure I agree,” the security officer shot back, a huge, shit-eating grin on her face. “My way hasn’t failed me so far. Anyway, by the time I’m done with them, they don’t even remember their own names.”

She flashed Semya a look. Normally, the lieutenant would have rolled her eyes at a crass boast like that. Now, it just made her squirm all the more.

Then, a third bar dyke joined the fray. “Why don’t we leave these two to bicker?” she suggested to Semya. Semya only vaguely recognized this one - a mess worker, perhaps. “And go somewhere a little more private.”

“Hey now,” the engineer interjected. She leaned across and slipped an arm around Semya’s shoulder, keeping her pulled close. “No poaching! I saw her first.”

The exchange left Semya burning up with flustered heat. It wasn’t just the way the engineer pulled her close so effortlessly, making her feel small and feeble. There was another element, too: the heady intoxication of being desired.

All these women were fighting over Semya. Competing for her, like she was a pretty bauble to be won. That was new to Semya. She’d been appreciated for her looks before, certainly - but never quite like this. It redoubled her euphoria, making her feel light, proud, giddy from the attention. It made the way she was being objectified and swept off her feet feel almost flattering. Like it was a victory, instead of a humiliation.

No, Semya tried to remind herself. This was-

Wrong?

Or was it right? She couldn’t tell. Suddenly, she remembered that

Alara was still here, lurking in a far corner, watching. Smiling.

Therapy. This was Semya's therapy. She had to go through with it. Right?

Suddenly, the sheer wrongness of that struck Semya. She became abruptly aware of the fact that she was on a precipice, teetering, about to lose a vital part of herself. She needed to fight that. She needed to remember who she was. She needed to-

"Hey now," the security officer piped up. "Who says she's yours to cop a feel of?"

Semya was about to try and say something - to insist everyone back off - when another arm snaked possessively around her waist. Again, she saw white as the security officer squeezed her.

"I'm sure the princess herself has something to say about it," the engineer retorted. "She owes me for the drink, remember?"

There it was again. Princess. It made Semya's stomach do loops. "N-n..." she tried to say. "Nnnno-"

"Oh, I don't know," inserted the mess worker. "The pretty little thing seems real tongue-tied. Here, I think you two are crowding the lady."

Far from helping, the mess worker reached forward, trying to squeeze up next to Semya. In the process, one of her hands came to rest on Semya's hip, fingertips already teasing at the hem of Semya's unreasonably short dress. The lieutenant whimpered.

She couldn't stand up for herself. Why couldn't she stand up for herself?

“Of course not,” the engineer scoffed. “She’s enjoying my company. She’s my kind of girl. Aren’t you?”

Semya wanted to deny it. All that came out was a moan. She could feel the body heat of these three tall, strong, confident women as they surrounded her. She could smell their scents. She was drowning in it. She felt so light. Like any of them could effortlessly throw her over their shoulders and carry her away.

“I think it’s my company she’s enjoying, actually,” the security officer put in. “Aren’t you, beautiful?”

Semya had to look down meekly as her cheeks scorched with heat.

“See?” the security officer boasted.

“What are you, a high schooler?” the mess worker sneered. “That’s not how you tell if a girl is having a good time. This is.”

In a single deft, well-practiced move, she surged forward and slipped her hand up the skirt of Semya’s minidress. A loud moan erupted from Semya’s lips as she felt the mess worker’s fingertips stroking against her.

She wasn’t wearing anything under the dress.

“See?” the mess worker crowed, holding up two of her fingers for the others to inspect. As she stretched them apart, a long string of sticky wetness formed between them. “She’s loving it.”

Semya had never felt more embarrassed. She wanted the ground to swallow her. Being presented with such visceral proof of her body’s eagerness was humiliating. It made all the denials she wanted to scream seem ridiculous and dishonest, even to her. There was an

extra level of humiliation to the fact that she was being treated this way by a mere mess worker - a woman who, normally, couldn't look her in the eyes without saluting.

But things like that didn't matter here.

At least it was just a hologram, Semya reminded herself.

That was the only thought she managed to hold on to as the bar around her erupted into mocking, raucous laughter.

"Wow," the engineer whistled. "Maybe you were right. Maybe she really is the kind of girl who likes to be treated rough."

As flustered as she was, Semya couldn't let that pass without comment. She had to hold on - to her butchness, to her strength, to her dignity. To something.

"I'm..." she managed, in a pitiful squeak, "nnottt."

As ever, her voice, high and girly, completely undermined her. The women lurking around her simply cooed condescendingly and drew even closer.

"Oh? You're not?" the security officer teased. "Don't worry, princess. We know how to treat a girl right. Don't you worry."

Semya could sense a subtle but sinister change in the atmosphere. The looks she was getting from these other women were growing more and more lustful. More and more predatory. They were no longer competing with each other - at least, not quite in the same way. Their competitiveness had been outstripped by a simple need to see the pretty, feminine Semya utterly ravaged for their collective pleasure.

This was no longer simply flirting. It was a feeding frenzy.

As much as anything else, she could taste it in the air. The pheromones, as all those bar dykes closed in. The smell, too; the musk, really. Sweat, smoke, booze, cologne. Semya was used to it, she'd thought, but not like this. Somehow, it was all the worse for that single, light, floral note; the perfume Alara had made her use before coming here. The dizzying mixture of it all was in her head, making it harder than ever to think. Making her painfully aware of her own weakness.

"So, princess," the mess worker cooed. "Am I taking you back to my place? Or are you showing the whole bar a good time?"

After a sharp intake of breath at the proposal, Semya glanced gratefully at the woman. There it was. One last offer of dignity - at least, relatively speaking. She wasn't sure what taking it would even mean, given that she was here for her therapy, but she had to try.

But as soon as she opened her mouth to reply - to beg, in the most humiliating way possible, to be taken home and fucked as a one-night-stand - the mess worker pushed two fingers inside her and expertly hooked them to stroke Semya's g-spot.

All that came out of her mouth was a high, loud, unbearably needy moan.

The moment felt like it lasted forever. Once Semya's moan died and she stopped seeing stars, all she could hear was mocking laughter.

"I guess our princess isn't such a good girl after all," the engineer commented, smirking. "Looks like we found our entertainment for the night!"

A cheer went up around the bar. Semya wanted to protest, but

that word had robbed her of her voice.

Entertainment. That was her now. The center of attention. The star of the show. Semya had always hated it. Had always hated being flashy. Hated the way people looked at her when she wore makeup and dresses. Like she was nothing more than a feast for their eyes. A treat to be devoured.

Except now, it made her cunt drip all over the mess worker's fingers.

"Hey, wait," piped up the security officer, although she was clearly no ally. "Don't keep her all to yourself. I want a piece."

Semya squealed as she felt the woman's hand snake down the back of her seat and cup her ass, squeezing and groping without mercy. The touch made her melt and squeal, and made her painfully aware of just how soft and yielding her body truly was.

It was like she was meant for this.

"Relax," drawled the engineer. "There's plenty of her to go around."

"Yeah," added the mess worker, "and she's plenty eager for it."

Using the hand between Semya's thighs, the mess worker started to pry her legs open - not forcefully, but again, Semya found herself utterly powerless to resist or protest. As she spread her legs, the hem of her tiny dress began to ride up, exposing more and more of her skin to the air. To the eyes of the hungry predators gathered around her.

"Don't look so scared," the security officer cooed. "This is what you wanted, right? This is why you came in here. Don't pretend. We

know what you are, princess. You want this. You need this.”

More than ever, Semya wanted to deny it - but this time, the simple truth of what she was being told overwhelmed her.

The security officer - no, this hologram - was right. She had come here for this. She needed this. Alara had taught her that. What use was there in denying it?

So instead, she found herself nodding meekly.

“Good girl,” the security told her. Semya moaned again.

Everyone was looking at her now. Everyone. Not just the three who were immediately crowded around her. She was the center of attention for the entire bar. Even the bartender was watching. Her moans were the music. Her shifting, writhing body was the entertainment. Everyone was looking, and Semya knew all they saw was a needy, flashy femme who was all but begging to be fucked.

And... was she? Semya was starting to lose track. She needed this, but she didn't want it. Was that right? But if she didn't want it, why was her body responding with such vicious eagerness? Why did every touch, every crass comment, every vulgar gaze fill her with violent heat?

She... wanted this?

Why? Because of her fetish? But what was it Alara had been saying? That her fetish was her real desires, repressed, waiting to be released? If that was the case, then...

Semya gasped as, out of nowhere, someone leaned forward and claimed her lips with a messy, forceful kiss. She could taste smoke on their breath and cheap whiskey on their tongue. The sheer

coarseness of it left her whimpering.

“Wow,” Semya heard someone say, “she really is eager.”

Semya realized she’d been kissing back just as needily.

As everyone laughed, Semya looked down and tried to hide her face, although some implanted instinct against ruining her makeup kept her from burying it in her hands. One moment, she wanted the ground to swallow her up and shield her. The next, that same sense of humiliation was transformed into a lightness of being; a desire to be swept up and aloft, higher, brighter, more visible than ever. Semya was giddy with the urge - before the shame returned, and crushed her anew.

As she grappled with those warring feelings, she could hear the nearby bar dykes arguing about her - specifically, about who was going to get the first ‘turn’. They were comparing dibs, debating about Semya’s potential preferences, and even, in a few cases, planting elbows on the bartop so they could arm-wrestle for her. Being the center of attention was mortifying, but being actively fought over was lighting an undeniable fire inside Semya.

This was her, now. A trophy. A prize to be claimed.

That was so new. She’d never felt desired quite like that - desired, certainly but in a different way. She was learning that the relationship between butch and femme was far from symmetrical - and that, until now, she’d been blissfully unaware of just dizzying the euphoria that stemmed from being desired and chased could be.

It was hot. It was so fucking hot.

After a few moments, the pecking order was decided and the ‘winner’ presented herself; unsurprisingly, it was the engineer who had first caught Semya when she’d tripped. Once, Semya would have

squared up against a woman like her with a grin on her face for the opportunity to take a pretty girl home. Now, as the engineer ogled her, Semya felt nothing but meek, flustered submission.

“Hey, princess,” the engineer said. Her voice was soft, but the cocky shark’s grin on her face made a lie of it. “Don’t worry. I’ll make you feel good.”

The promise made Semya shiver. For the first time, she truly looked at the other woman. She was tall, and wearing a ribbed tank top that left her burly arms on display. She had a thick-set, husky build, but when she moved and flexed, the musculature underneath was clearly visible, attesting to long hours spent lifting and carrying machinery in the bowels of the *Inyx*. She had sailors’ tattoos on her biceps, marking ships and campaigns served on, and her hair was short and slicked over to one side.

Words came unbidden into Semya’s mind. Words she’d normally reserve for herself, not think about other women. Cool. Handsome. Strong.

Hot.

A nervous, dumb smile came to Semya’s face.

And her eyes went wide as the engineer dropped to her knees and buried herself between Semya’s thighs.

The very first touch of her tongue had Semya moaning. She twitched and writhed as the pleasure hit, although all her efforts did nothing more than encourage the engineer as she started eating Semya out. It overwhelmed her instantly and defied all reason. Semya had always been a giver, not a receiver, but within moments this woman’s skillful tongue unraveled that part of her.

Always a top, always a giver - but not anymore. She couldn’t

forget this. Her body couldn't forget this.

At that moment, far too late, as the first rush of her new addiction hit, Semya suddenly became conscious of the fact that this was wrong. Completely wrong. This wasn't a cure for her fetish. It was the opposite. It was fuel for the flames. And she was at risk of losing something she could truly never get back.

She needed to fight this. She needed to resist. She needed to-

"O-oh myy gggoddd!" The scream forced its way from Semya's lips as the engineer's tongue found its way even deeper inside her. The entire bar laughed at her plight, and the mixture of humiliation and pleasure robbed her of her train of thought.

She needed to... what?

She couldn't think.

The engineer was making a hopeless puppet of her. She had such power over Semya; whenever she wanted, she could make her moan loud, or gasp breathlessly, or twitch this way or that, all with a single flick of her tongue. She proved it, over and over again. She delighted in it, making a mockery of the feeble resistance Semya tried to put up when she attempted to hold back her moans.

Little by little, she was teasing out and eroding Semya's resistance. Chewing it up and spitting it out. Every time Semya stifled a moan or bit down on her own thrashing, the engineer noticed and made sure that her next display of ravenous pleasure was all the more humiliating for it. She tongue-fucked her skillfully, slow one moment, fast the next, attacking her clit, or stroking her lips, or pushing her tongue deep inside her until Semya's back arched and her screams filled the whole bar.

Every time Semya tried fighting back, even a little, she slipped

deeper into pleasure-drunk euphoria and she became more and more painfully aware of her own weakness. Her own lightness. Compared to the engineer - to how strong and forceful she was - Semya felt like she was made of nothing.

And all the while, her moans grew louder and louder.

"Settle down, princess," jeered one of the women who had accosted Semya earlier - the security officer, she thought, although her vision was far too blurred to tell. "You're getting exactly what you came here for."

"N-n-noooo," Semya forced out, even as the bar echoed with mocking laughter. "I'm not... I'm nnnottt... I'm... this... isn'tttt..."

She couldn't quite get the words out. The engineer's tongue was turning her thoughts into slurry. Even if Semya could speak without moaning, what would she say? What was there to protest?

It wasn't like she could pretend not to be enjoying this. The wetness dripping onto the floor of the bar made a lie of that.

"I'm..." she moaned. "I'mmmm"

What?

Masc? Butch? A top?

She wasn't sure any of those things were true anymore.

Her identity itself was being washed away by the simple fact that nothing had ever felt better than this.

"OK, princess," said the engineer from between her thighs, drool and stickiness dripping from her lips. "How about we let everyone

else take their turn?”

Before Semya could reply, the engineer rose smoothly to her feet and spun her around with her powerful arms, so that she was facing out into the bar. Her deep blush and shameful wetness were on display, and even without someone holding them apart, Semya couldn't seem to find the strength to close her legs.

She was a spectacle. And everyone was looking. Everyone. A dozen pairs of eyes, each of them full of lust.

And it was all for her. All for Semya.

In the face of that, her soiled pride simply melted away. The simple euphoria of being beautiful and desired and prized cleansed away everything else. Amidst Semya's frenzied lust, it seemed like clarity.

She wanted this. She needed this.

Because, deep down, it was who she really was.

And with that settled, she found herself nodding and grinning stupidly.

“Y-yes,” she said, in a dumb, high-pitched, girly voice. “Y-yes, please.”

That was all anyone needed to hear. In an instant, everyone else was on top of her, a dozen or more hands exploring every part of her body with the kind of ravenous, destructive lust normally reserved for picking the petals from flowers.

Everyone wanted a piece of Semya. They wanted to soil her. They wanted to ruin her dress, to smear her lipstick, to leave her

eyeliner running down her face. They lived for it. They loved it.

And so did she.

It was a new feeling to Semya. The feeling of being a pretty vase, cracking apart. It was such a thrill. All along, Semya had suspected how good it would feel. That was why had become such a singular, fetishistic focus of hers. But to experience it was something else. It put the lie to all her excuses about it being 'just' a fetish.

This wasn't 'just' anything. And Semya could see, now, clearly, that Alara had been right all along. She couldn't be cured. Not of this. It was too intense. Now she was drowning in the feeling, and all she wanted was more.

She wanted to live this. Every day. Every moment.

She wanted to make sure there was no going back.

So, as the mess worker from earlier dove between her legs and started eating her out, Semya made sure her moans were higher and girlier than ever before. As another, a woman Semya hadn't exchanged a single word with, yanked the top of her dress down to make her tits spill out, Semya made sure the faux-protest she let out was breathy, weak, and very distinctly feminine.

It felt so good, being violated like that. The fragility, most of all. Fragility and femininity were inextricably fused in Semya's mind. For the longest time, she'd been laboring under the delusion that it meant femininity was wrong for her. Now, Alara had helped her to understand how breathtakingly pleasurable fragility could be.

And you never felt more fragile than when you were breaking.

"Y-yes!" Semya moaned. No more 'no's. No more denials. She

was beyond that. “P-please! Moreeeee!”

She was free. Free to embrace her fantasies. Free to sink into the bliss, safe and secure in the knowledge that besides Alara, nobody was watching. These were all holograms. They weren’t really members of the crew. Nothing more than hardened light. With that fixed firmly in her mind, Semya was free to embrace her darkest fantasies. To breathe deep, and let the overpowering scent of sweat and lust carry her away.

At first, there was only one woman who wasn’t participating in the feeding frenzy. Alara Hisarlik, the ship’s counselor, was still standing off to one side, watching without a word. But anyone who saw her would have been able to tell that her bystanding was anything innocent. There was an unhealthy, lurid glow in her eyes; a fascination that was entirely at odds with her duty as a therapist and a healer. Her enjoyment was evident, but it was just as obvious that this wasn’t enough to sate her appetite. Not even close.

Semya Kuznetzov was simply her first subject. And this was simply the beginning of her new career.

Out of nowhere, another woman appeared next to her. The holodeck’s emitters carefully manipulated the photons passing through the air to form a holographic image that was the perfect duplicate of Wasp, the hacker, right down to the neon green highlights in her hair. After a brief moment, the image came to life, a wicked grin spreading across her face as she trained her eyes on the counselor.

“Nice work, ‘lara,” Wasp drawled. “I knew you had it in you.”

Alara didn’t so much as glance at her. She didn’t want to miss a thing. She wanted to etch every moment of Semya’s fall into her memory.

“I suppose I did,” Alara mused in reply. “All along. I really did.”

For her, as much as for Semya, this was a rebirth. It emanated from her; every mote of dignity and strength that Semya had lost, Alara seemed to have gained.

“I just got one question,” Wasp said, as she sauntered around, phasing through tables and stools as she did. No hardlight today, apparently. With her punk look, she seemed oddly at home in the dark confines of the dyke bar. “Why do it so slow? All the sessions, the old-school hypnosis schtick... why? If you wanted her like this, all you had to do was slip her one of my new little toys.”

Alara smiled a thin smile. “You don’t understand,” she replied. “Hasn’t anyone ever told you? It’s about the journey, not the destination. It’s the personal touches. The little push-and-pull of watching her come apart.” The counselor shivered. “I wouldn’t skip it for the world.”

Wasp stared at her thoughtfully for a moment, but then just shrugged. “If you say so. Not like I’m in any place to judge. As long as you’re still in with me, you can be any kind of pervert you want.”

Alara laughed. “Thank you. And besides, you’ve used the time well, I think.”

Wasp tittered like a giddy child. “Oh, absolutely. I’ve got almost all of them now. Doc, down in medbay, is quite the little worker drone. The whole crew has pretty much got their ‘vaccination’. We’re ready for the endgame.”

“I see.” Alara seemed more interested in her own plans than Wasp’s. After a moment, she nodded towards the bar dykes were fucking Semya. “Speaking of: thank you for their cooperation. I think it’s the perfect little touch.”

“No problem.” Wasp grinned. “I’m no stranger to theatricality.”

Both of them watched the developing orgy. A couple of the women had lifted Semya up onto the bartop, and people were taking turns crawling up between her legs and eating her out. They seemed to be competing to see who could make her thrash the most. At the other end, another group was using her mouth just as forcefully, making her suck on fingers, strap-ons, beer bottles. Whatever they wanted.

Semya was eager for all of it.

She was the center of attention. The focal point of all this debauchery. In a strange, perverse way, she really did look like some kind of princess, in the ruins of her delicate jewelry and golden dress, now hopelessly torn and crumpled from all the groping. Everyone else at the bar was gathered around to pay her a twisted tribute, and her skin was covered with proof of their adorations: cum, drool, kiss marks, love bites, and more.

And Semya loved it. She was in heaven. She had completely given herself over to fantasy.

Now it was time for Alara to bring her back down to reality.

“Time to rip off the band-aid,” she murmured, stepping forward.

“Knock yourself out, shrink,” Wasp said, dissolving back into nothingness as she offered a mock salute to her conspirator.

A vicious smirk on her face, Alara held her head high as she walked to the center of the space.

“Computer,” she said, in a loud, clear voice. “End simulation.”

The ship's computer responded instantly, and with a shimmer, the world around them dissolved. The bar, the stools, the drinks, even the street outside - all of it phased out of existence as the light dissipated. Semya was still held up in the air, a few feet from the ground, but only by a nondescript, gray, hardlight box generated by the holodeck's safety subroutines. That was all that remained of the holodeck scenario that had been running. Everything else had shut down. Nothing else was left.

But all the bar dykes were.

"Do you see, Semya?" Alara said to her patient. "I'm afraid I can't simply allow you to lapse into futile escapism. What kind of cure would that be?"

It took Semya a long moment to rouse herself from the blissful overwhelmed, aroused stupor she'd lapsed into. But when she started to process what was happening to her, her eyes went wide and started trembling.

"Wha..." she panted in disbelief. "What... you're... they're..."

Real.

Not holograms. Real people. All of the women who'd been toying with Semya were simply members of the crew, dressed up and playing their assigned parts. It had to be true - it was the only way to explain why they were still here - but even so, Semya couldn't quite bring herself to accept it.

But eventually, the truth forced her to her knees. As much as Semya wanted to pretend this was simply a cruel trick, now that she was thinking about it, there was something no amount of holodeck deception could explain: the smell. The scent of sweat, musk and sex Semya had been drinking deeply of all evening.

Holodecks couldn't recreate smells. She should have known.

"That's right," Alara confirmed, as she saw the penny drop. "You've been doing all this in front of members of the crew. In front of people under your command. And rest assured: they won't forget it."

Unpleasant laughter echoed around the now-empty space. Wasp had used her tools of mental manipulation to make them play along, but they were far from mindless drones. They had been enjoying it every bit as much as Semya.

A chance to defile a stern, stuck-up XO? Who wouldn't?

Semya looked between them like a frightened, trapped doe. There was no escape. All of them had seen her at her lowest. At her most humiliated. They knew her innermost secret. Her fetish had been laid bare. They would never look at her the same way again - and nor would anyone else, once word spread.

Semya's reputation was shattered. Her dignity was a thing of the past. Her very identity, a facade barely held up by increasingly thin excuses, was now collapsing.

After a few long, unpleasant seconds, Semya made peace with it the only way she could.

By embracing it.

Her eyes fogged over again and, with a vacant, girlish giggle, she beckoned to a familiar face: the mess worker who had first touched her.

"Heyyyyy," Semya slurred. Her voice was breathy. Needy. "Why did you stop?"

In that moment, her pride broke. Her identity broke. Her mind broke. Whatever had been left of the stern, quiet, understated, strong XO of the Inyx was currently dribbling out of her mouth and drooling from between her thighs. In the face of impossible humiliation, Semya had collapsed in on herself and decided that this was all she wanted to do and all she wanted to be.

The women surrounding her exchanged looks. They all knew prey going limp when they saw it. Still, they looked to Alara for permission. She returned a quick nod. With that, the orgy resumed.

They kept at Semya for hours, eating her out, slapping her around, leaving her makeup a ruin - and all the while, she did nothing more than giggle and moan and squeal girlishly in submissive acceptance. Alara didn't stay for that, though. She had already seen the moment she'd been working towards. She'd won. And for what felt like the first time in her life, she knew satisfaction.

The next day, when Semya Kuznetzov reported for duty wearing a dress, it was nothing more than confirmation.

CHAPTER TEN

“There we go,” Dr. Hiraga told the mess officer lying in her examination chair. “All done.”

Mess officer Uma Vilchis yawned and stretched as she woke. She blinked a few times. For some reason, she was left with the persistent impression of bright, swirling lights shining straight into her eyes.

“Huh,” she said sleepily. “That really was painless.”

“Is that what people have been saying?” Dr. Hiraga smiled professionally as she made notes on her dataslate.

Uma nodded. “I’ve been hearing all about it for weeks.”

“Weeks,” Dr. Hiraga repeated, raising an eyebrow. “Yes, I suppose it has been, hasn’t it? I’ve been too busy to keep track, but we’re finally almost done with the imp- I mean, the inoculation. You’re pretty much the last one.”

“The last one.” Uma sighed as she sat up. “Isn’t that just typical?”

“I’m sorry?” Dr. Hiraga said, taken aback.

“Oh, it’s fine.” Uma shrugged. “It makes sense. I guess the mess officer really is about the last person who needs an inoculation against some kind of alien virus.” She visibly bucked herself up and

slapped a forced smile on her face. “My apologies, doctor. I shouldn’t make any of this your problem. I’m just... well, it’s been a long tour. Not a lot of excitement involved for someone like me.”

Not a lot of excitement back home either, although Uma left that part unsaid. The source of Uma’s maudlin mood was simple: she was bored and felt hopelessly overlooked. A solution, unfortunately, was far less simple. As always, Uma tried to focus on her responsibilities as mess officer. On good food, and on being a warm and friendly face to all the weary crewmen who came to the *Inyx*’s mess hall for rest and succor. Uma liked to think that she played a small but critical part in keeping morale high and making sure the ship continued to operate at peak performance.

But keeping the smile on her face was getting harder and harder. The long tour was wearing on people. The crew was tired and irritable. They didn’t want to chat with their friendly mess officer. And lately, there had been another change in mood, growing steadily with each passing day. Uma couldn’t quite put her finger on it, but it was like everyone else was in on a secret joke Uma simply wasn’t privy to.

Most of the crew were probably hoping that their mission would come to an end soon and that they’d be able to return home and see their friends and families again. For Uma, though, that prospect offered little comfort. She had a family, yes. Kids, even. But in recent years, her personal life had seemed just as unrewarding as her professional one. It wasn’t bad, exactly. Just like being the mess officer on the *Inyx* wasn’t bad.

Uma just needed a little excitement in her life.

“Not a lot of excitement, huh?” came a voice. “Why don’t I help you with that?”

Uma looked around sharply. She could have sworn that she and

the doctor had been alone in medbay, but now there was a third woman in the room with them. Uma couldn't imagine where she might have come from. It was like she had just appeared out of thin air. Strangely, Dr. Hiraga had no response whatsoever to the stranger's sudden appearance.

Stranger still, there was something familiar about her. Uma could have sworn she recognized her from somewhere. Was she on the crew? She didn't look like it, not with those technopunk clothes and that unruly, electric green hair. Maybe she had been in one of the briefings that the captain circulated from time to time. Uma barely paid attention to those. They weren't particularly relevant to the mess hall, after all.

"Hi," Uma said, for want of anything better to say. "Do I know you?"

"Sure you do," the punk woman promised as she slouched her way across the room. There was something distinctly sleazy about the way she spoke. "I'm the... uh... how about the 'uniform compliance officer'?" She snickered. "Yeah. I'm that."

Uma stopped trying to smile. Something was clearly wrong here. "That doesn't make sense. The Alliance doesn't have uniform compliance officers."

The woman just winked mischievously and lifted her hand with a flourish. "You do now."

She snapped her fingers.

At once, the room around Uma disappeared, drowned out by a vast, spinning, kaleidoscopic pattern that immediately tugged at her will, promising to steal it away. With her last few moments of consciousness, Uma reflected that, before, she'd been wrong. The lights hadn't been shining *into* her eyes. They'd been coming from

behind them.

Then, even that thought was gone. The holo-implant Dr. Hiraga had just planted in Uma's brain drowned out her conscious mind, leaving her nothing more than an empty vessel for whatever thoughts and feelings Wasp wanted to pour into her.

And once Uma was completely hypnotized, the spiral began to pour. Shifting with every passing instant, it encoded its visual pattern with layers and layers of information that swiftly reprogrammed Uma's mind. The implant had long since been perfected. It admitted no resistance. Within just moments, Uma's deeply-formed ideas about propriety, hierarchy, and common sense were all formed anew.

Eventually, the implant switched off and Uma returned to consciousness. Blearily, the mess officer rubbed her eyes. The lingering effects were far worse than those of the procedure.

She frowned, confused. The lingering effects of what?

"I'm... I'm sorry," she said slowly, to the strange woman still standing in front of her. "I must have... I must have... um..."

"Don't worry about it," the woman offered a touch impatiently. "I was just telling you, I'm the uniform compliance officer. Uniform Compliance Officer Wasp."

"Wasp," Uma echoed slowly. Why did that name sound so familiar? Then she remembered, and it all fell into place. Of course it was familiar! Uma rose to her feet and saluted stiffly, embarrassed at her lapse of memory. "Uniform compliance officer! Forgive me."

"Don't worry about it," Wasp said. She was grinning from ear to ear. "At ease."

Uma relaxed gratefully. Still, she couldn't help but wonder why the uniform compliance officer had come here, of all places. Moreover, though, she was simply embarrassed to have forgotten about her at first. Forgetting about such an important, high-ranking officer was a major faux pas. Fortunately, Wasp didn't seem inclined to pull her up on it. Instead, she swiped the dataslate out of Dr. Hiraga's hand and started reading it. The doctor still didn't react.

"You're... right, the mess officer!" Wasp nodded slowly. "Uma Vilchis. I remember you from the crew roster. Not from the holodeck, though. Not much of a fantasy life, huh?"

"I suppose not, sir," Uma replied.

"That's kind of a shame." Wasp made a point of looking Uma up and down, plainly ogling her body. She wolf-whistled appreciatively. "I wish we'd gotten to know each other sooner. Could have had some fun with you. There aren't a lot of women built like you on military starships."

Uma shifted uncomfortably. The way Wasp was talking to her and looking at her seemed unmistakably sexual and inappropriate - but who was she to question such a high-ranking officer?

"Well, you know what people say, sir," she laughed nervously. "Never trust a skinny cook."

As mess officer, that distrust was one thing Uma never had to worry about. Uma was visibly, undeniably full-figured and plump, and always had been. It was all over: her face, her chest, her belly, her thighs. Uma was, quite simply, fat. She didn't dislike it, even if it sometimes made her self-conscious. Her figure had always been natural to her - not helped, admittedly, by the same love of food that had guided her to becoming a mess officer. A pair of pregnancies had only made matters worse, although, from the whispers that reached her ears, Uma understood that there were more than a few

women aboard the *Inyx* who quietly appreciated the way the extra weight sat on her hips and her ass.

It was, admittedly, true, that her physique wasn't quite up to military regs. But even stern commanders like Captain Vasser tended to let that particular regulation slip. Nobody wanted to see a skinny cook in the mess hall — and besides, it wasn't like she was in any danger of being sent into combat.

"Anyway," Uma added, hoping to put an end to Wasp's scrutiny. "I think you'll find my uniform entirely up to code, sir."

"Hm," Wasp mused. "Yeah, actually, no. It's not."

"It's not?" Uma blinked, dismayed. She didn't understand. She was always fastidious in her presentation. She looked down at herself, but saw nothing amiss.

"See, there's actually a brand new uniform for the mess officer." Wasp's grin somehow widened still further. She could barely keep herself from cackling. "It's just come into force. It's meant to help liven things up a bit. That's why I'm here, actually. To bring you up to speed." She threw an arm around Uma's shoulder. Uma was too distracted to register that she was a hardlight hologram. "Come with me. Let's get you fitted."

* * *

"D-d-d-," Uma stammered, blushing so deep she thought her face would melt as the sheer, unrelenting embarrassment she felt robbed her of her words, "d-d-do I h-h-have to?"

"Yes," Wasp replied impatiently. "It's the new uniform. Now, hurry up!"

Hands trembling, Uma could only nod meekly and keep working the long, red, soft rope around her own body. Completing the ties - the shibari, Wasp had called it - hadn't been easy. It was all new to Uma, but she was good with knots, at least, and Wasp had been a very insistent teacher.

As she wrapped the latest length of rope around her thigh, pulling it tight so it pressed into her soft flesh, Uma once again checked the diagram Wasp had pulled up for her on the dataslate. It was exacting, and following it had taken forever. Uma couldn't believe how long these regulations were getting, and she didn't understand why they were being posted on illicit holonet sites - but who was she to question the uniform compliance officer? At least it seemed like she was almost done, but Uma wasn't sure if that was a curse or a blessing. On the one hand, Uma was keen to put this humiliating ritual behind her.

On the other, if she kept going, she'd at least have more rope covering her body up.

Once Uma finished the knot, Wasp stepped back, looked the mess officer up and down, and clapped her hands together out of sheer glee. "Oh, yes! Looking good, girl."

Uma wanted to shrink into her own skin.

"I c-can't," she bleated. "Y-you expect me to g-go out there? L-like this?"

All the way down her torso and around her hips, Uma was bound tight with rope. It fell about her in symmetrical loops, artfully designed to best accentuate every aspect of the female form. The ties around her breasts pinched and lifted them, making them seem bigger, more prominent, infinitely soft and inviting. Across her stomach, the rope was worked into a diamond pattern, like netting, drawing attention to the pale, alluring skin beneath. Around her

hips, the ropes pulled tight, pressing against Uma's curves and reminding her of their presence with every step.

On any woman, they would have looked unmistakably sexual. On Uma, it was on another level.

At Wasp's instruction, Uma had pulled the ropes particularly tight around her prodigiously soft body. The effect was magnificent. Everywhere, Uma's plump body bulged visibly between the gaps in the ropes. It was like she was begging for all who saw her to reach out and sink their fingers into her needy, yielding flesh. Around her stomach, it was especially visible. The rope bondage acted like lingerie, framing and shaping Uma's belly. It made her look like the very image of fertility.

Nothing could have been more desperately embarrassing.

"It's your uniform, Miss Vilchis," Wasp drawled, rising to her feet. "What kind of Alliance officer objects to their uniform?"

"It's... that's..."

Uma's mouth kept moving, but her brain froze up, paralyzed by the absurd contradictions in what she was hearing. It was ridiculous for rope bondage to serve as a military uniform. And yet, it did. That was what the uniform compliance officer was telling her. She could not think otherwise.

"B-but..." Uma said frantically, searching for any way out. "It's... it's indecent!"

"Indecent?" Wasp laughed. "Is that any way to talk about your uniform?"

Uma squeaked. "N-no, sir!"

“You should be proud of your uniform!” Wasp declared. “Isn’t that right?”

Uma turned an even deeper shade of red and nodded miserably. “Y-yes, sir. But... I... proud?”

Wasp shrugged, a cruel smirk writ large on her face. “I simply don’t see the issue.”

Uma squeezed her legs together and shivered as she felt rope rubbing against her skin. She knew Wasp was right — she was in charge of uniforms, after all — but she couldn’t help reaching for excuses all the same. “B-but it might... wouldn’t it... um... d-distract the rest of the crew?”

Wasp sighed theatrically. “Maybe, admittedly, this is just a little bit too early for something quite so... open. Even if the rest of the crew have been implanted, they aren’t broken in quite yet.”

Uma had no idea what she was talking about, but a sigh of relief was on her lips as she sensed Wasp’s resolve wavering.

“Fine,” Wasp said eventually. “Have it your way.”

“I can wear a different uniform?” Uma asked hastily.

“Oh, no.” Wasp’s smirk returned with a vengeance. Uma couldn’t help but be struck by the feeling that she’d stepped into some kind of trap. “Not quite.”

Just a few minutes later, Uma was walking gingerly through the *Inyx*’s corridors, heading for the mess hall - and desperately praying that her embarrassment didn’t show in her face.

They can't see, she told herself. They can't see what I'm wearing.

"Good afternoon, Uma!" someone called out, as Uma rounded a corner. A crewman. Uma didn't know their name, but she did recognize them. A regular friendly face at the mess.

"G-good afternoon!" As she replied, Uma tried her hardest to sound casual. It didn't work. Her voice was an octave higher than usual.

Mercifully, the crewman didn't comment. A strange look passed over their face, but they kept walking without saying another word.

Uma sighed with relief - but her relief was dashed as soon as she walked past another vent, and felt a breath of cool air passing over her skin. It was an unpleasant reminder of just how naked she truly was.

She was still dressed in the uniform Wasp had prescribed for her: intricate, bright red rope bondage, artistically wound around her entire body. The only difference was that nobody else could see it. Before sending her down to work her regular shift at the mess, Wasp had issued Uma with a portable holographic projector which, attached to one of the ropes on her torso, projected a perfect simulacrum of her old, standard-issue Alliance uniform.

In a way, it was an ideal solution. Uma's modesty was perfectly preserved.

And in a way, it solved absolutely nothing.

For instance, as Uma arrived at the mess and busied herself preparing meals for the crew who were just about to come off their shifts, she found she couldn't quite ignore the way one of those ropes snaked up between her thighs and pressed against her sex every time she moved.

More and more, it was becoming a distraction. A sharp bite of unwelcome pleasure that nipped at her over and over again, threatening to turn her words into moans and fill her face with unwholesome color.

Why did she have to wear this under the hologram? Uma kept asking herself that question. And she kept reminding herself of the only answer she had:

It was her uniform. She had no choice.

All Uma could do was take deep breaths in a bid to stay calm as she started serving the crew of the *Inyx* their meals. One by one, the weary crewmen came to queue up in front of Uma so she could dole out the meals she had carefully prepared earlier that day. As usual, most of them had little more to offer in return than a nod or a half-grunted acknowledgment. Normally, that would have gotten on Uma's nerves.

Now, she was desperately thankful.

They couldn't see what she was wearing. But reminding herself of that did Uma little good when she could still feel the cool air against her bare skin all over her body. When she could still feel the ropes. Whenever Uma looked down at herself, the illusion seemed paper-thin.

She was naked. Worse than naked.

And it was driving her crazy.

Every new face became a source of excitement. Every interaction became a fight to keep a cool, composed demeanor. It didn't matter what she told herself. Her brain would not accept that she was clothed. It knew the truth and screamed it at her, drawing sweat

from her brow and slapping an uneven, nervous smile on her face.

“Hey, Uma!” came a familiar voice. Uma looked up and recognized a crewman — Rhea — who always took the time to chat. “How’s your shift treating you?”

“G-good!” Uma squeaked, then winced. Her voice was horrifically uneven, and elicited a perplexed look in response. Uma’s anxiety doubled. She felt it in her gut as a tight knot. “Um. How’s... yours?”

“Fine, I guess,” Rhea replied. Normally, their exchange might have ended there. But it was too late. Uma had aroused her close attention. “You OK? You seem a little... off.”

“N-nope!” Uma tried even harder to control her voice. It only made matters worse. “I-I mean... yes! I’m OK. Just... um...”

She tried to think of an excuse. Her mind short-circuited. The only thought thundering through her head was a single conviction, irrational but all-consuming.

She can see. Rhea can see. She can see everything.

Rhea’s eyes flicked up and down over Uma’s plump physique. Uma could feel them stabbing into her, sharp as needle points. They seemed to strip away the ephemeral guise of the hologram, leaving Uma’s tender, soft flesh bared for the shocked, lustful gazes of all who had come to the mess.

“We’ve been out here so long,” Rhea offered sympathetically. “Maybe you should take a little more rec time? I’m sure the captain would-“

A cough from somewhere back in the queue interrupted them. “Hurry up!”

“Oops.” Mercifully, Rhea hurried along, freeing Uma from her scrutiny. “Sorry!”

Uma only had a moment to gather herself before she needed to serve the next crewman. As she did, she was panting. She couldn’t center herself. She just kept falling into the desperate thrill of her new uniform.

Then it occurred to her: wasn’t this exactly the excitement she had been craving?

She choked down on the thought at once, guided by two contradictory impulses. One told her sternly that she wasn’t the kind of pervert who would take excitement from something so utterly humiliating. The other whispered that she was exactly that kind of pervert if she found something as mundane as her uniform sexually humiliating.

Uma frowned, assailed by a moment of dizzy confusion. It was like she was on the cusp of grasping some deeper truth - but it never came.

And with the seemingly never-ending queue of hungry crewmen, she had no time to dwell on it. Uma turned to serve the next, and the next, and the next, and with each one, the anxious heat in her body only grew and grew. By the time the next familiar face appeared at the counter, the rope between her legs was pressing so hard against her cunt, every movement was blissful agony.

“Good day, Uma,” said Lieutenant Kuznetzov, greeting the mess officer with a warm smile. “Everything running smoothly as usual?”

It was only recently that Lieutenant Kuznetzov had become one of Uma’s reliably friendly faces. Before, she’d been one of the least approachable of all; a butch, imposing woman with an unreadable

face and no words to offer but criticisms. Now, she was unfailingly bright and sunny. She'd grown her hair out into an appealing bob, set off against a full face of makeup. Instead of her uniform, she wore a pretty little dress that set off all her body's feminine features.

Or was that simply her uniform now? Uma couldn't be sure.

"Of c-course," Uma whimpered. As unthreatening as she was now, Lieutenant Kuznetsov's eyes still felt like hot knives. Uma shivered all over, and felt the ropes more keenly than ever.

Again, Uma's voice betrayed her plight. She just couldn't keep it even, not when she was experiencing such constant stimulation. When Lieutenant Kuznetsov gave her a surprised look, Uma thought for sure she was going to be discovered. Surely there was no way someone as perceptive as the lieutenant would fail to notice that something strange was going on with her. But as Lieutenant Kuznetsov looked, Uma started to realize there was something off about her gaze. It was dull, somehow; glazed over, lacking all of its usual sharpness. If Uma hadn't known better, she would have sworn that Lieutenant Kuznetsov was somehow tranquilized.

As if to confirm her suspicions, the searching look on Lieutenant Kuznetsov's face eventually slackened into a dull, agreeable smile. "You look nice," she said, before she took the tray of food Uma was holding out for her and moved along.

It was a banal comment, but it still set Uma twitching with a fierce mix of emotions. She looked nice? What did that mean? Had Lieutenant Kuznetsov noticed something? Uma peered at a nearby metal counter, studying her reflection. She looked normal, didn't she? Didn't she?

As far as Uma could tell, her holographic guise was holding up well. There was no hint of the binding ropes beneath. But that didn't mean Uma looked normal. Far from it. As she looked into the

makeshift mirror, Uma was struck by the dumb, nervous grin that refused to slip from her face, and by the hint of lurid color in her cheeks. Even if the ropes didn't show, the thrill certainly did. Uma was glowing with it.

She looked good.

That simple observation set Uma's heart aflutter. What did that mean? Why did she look so good like this?

And why was she enjoying it so much?

It was just a uniform, she told herself. Just a uniform. Nothing more. Uma's brow furrowed. Once again, the blatant contradictions started to gnaw at her. If it was just a uniform, why was she so turned on? If it was just a uniform, why did she feel the need to hide it?

It was almost like-

"How's it going, babe?"

Uma blinked, startled by the voice. She looked over and saw exactly what she had been afraid of. It was Wasp.

The uniform compliance officer.

As she looked Uma up and down, a ravenous look in her eyes, Uma made herself stand up straight, even though it forced the rope between her legs to press even deeper into her sensitive cunt. Her hands at her sides, she tried to subtly pull on a few ties here and there, arranging them to be just so.

She needed to look her best. Her uniform had to be perfect.

"Very good, sir," Uma managed, just barely not moaning. It was

far from the truth, of course, but it wouldn't do to complain in front of such a senior officer.

"Great, great," Wasp drawled. She seemed to be able to see straight through the holographic projection of Uma's old uniform. Uma didn't think to question that, although she did notice that Wasp seemed to be holding something behind her back. "You look... mmf. Good enough to eat."

Uma shivered. She felt herself soiling the rope with her wetness. "T-thank you, sir."

"But, see, I'm actually here 'cause I forgot something," Wasp added swiftly. "There's, uh, an extra regulation. Something else you need for your uniform."

"What is it?" Uma asked. The grin on Wasp's face made her feel like she was stepping on a land mine just by asking.

"Here!" Wasp declared, and revealed the object she was holding with a gleeful flourish.

It was a dildo.

Uma was instantly, utterly aghast at the object. A hundred different protests immediately rose to her lips. This was absurd. A dildo wasn't part of any kind of uniform. It wasn't clothing at all, it was a sex toy. This was degrading. Humiliating. Where did Wasp get her authority from? Since when did the *Inyx* have a 'uniform compliance officer'? Was that even a real position? Shouldn't she speak to the captain about this?

Then, almost as quickly, the protests were smothered by a logic that was equal parts foreign, ridiculous, and utterly implacable.

Wasp was the uniform compliance officer. That meant she was in charge of uniforms. And Uma needed to wear her uniform.

Suddenly, as perturbed as Uma was by the object in Uma's hands. She couldn't help but yearn for it.

Her uniform simply wasn't complete without the dildo.

That didn't mean she wasn't embarrassed, though. She was. Deathly so. Uma's cheeks burned bright scarlet as she ushered Wasp toward the privacy of the ship's galley.

"S-sorry, sir," Uma whispered. "I... I hadn't realized. I'll take care of it at once. Just... in private. Please."

She was so flustered, she didn't think to question the way Wasp simply phased through the counter to join Uma in the galley, out of sight of the queuing crew members. A few of them let out impatient sighs, but besides that, none of them seemed to take much notice.

Once the door to the galley slid shut, Wasp held the dildo out toward Uma. The mess officer took it gingerly, and her shame only grew once it became clear that Wasp fully intended to watch her.

Uma couldn't protest against it. Wasp was the uniform compliance officer. It was her right.

All Uma could do was try to stifle a moan as she pulled the rope between her legs to one side and pushed the seven-inch dildo all the way inside herself.

She failed.

"S-s-sorry, sir," Uma bleated after the shrill moan erupted from her lips. "It's u-unprofessional. Sorry. I j-just-"

Her words died. She couldn't think. The long, hard, silicone shaft inside her pussy was turning her legs to jelly.

"Don't worry about it." The lurid, smarmy look on Wasp's face was all but manic. "New uniforms take a little breaking in, am I right?"

"Y-y-yeah," Uma agreed breathlessly.

She tried to close her legs. That was a mistake. A sharp, electric shock of pleasure almost made her bend double. Uma tried to take her hand away and found that the shibari tie running between her thighs was taut enough to keep the dildo in place, resting on it.

Uma couldn't breathe for panting. She could see stars. Her knees were weak. A few droplets of wetness trickled down the dildo and fell to the floor. Her heart was pounding. She had never been so feverishly excited.

"Great," Wasp said, openly leering at Uma. "Then, I guess you'd better hurry up and get back to work, officer!"

"Y-yes, sir," Uma whimpered, offering a weak salute. She took her duty seriously, of course, but she couldn't imagine how she was going to be able to perform it now.

She turned to head back out to the counter, and the very first step she took almost brought her to her knees.

It was impossible to move without working the toy even deeper inside her body, pressing ever more insistently against the most sensitive parts of her. Uma couldn't even minimize the pleasure without resorting to an awkward, bow-legged gait that gave her away at once. All she could do was try not to let it show, but by the time she reached the counter, she needed to lean on it heavily just to keep

herself upright. Uma's every nerve ending was lit up, hypersensitive, ready to explode.

"Oh, just one more thing," Wasp said, as she waltzed past Uma. "The regs say it needs to be switched on, too."

Uma barely had time to process the significance of that before Wasp snapped her fingers — and the toy inside Uma's cunt started to vibrate.

At once, Uma bent double and came.

She had already been on a hair trigger. The sensation of intense, merciless vibrations radiating from within her core was more than enough to push her over the edge. Uma saw white, and only managed to keep herself from moaning by expelling all the air from her lungs in a desperate, ragged gasp. For a brief moment, Uma forgot her shame and was carried away by the great wave of pleasure that ripped through her body.

Then, a voice called her back.

"Hey, can we get some grub already?"

Uma looked up, and as she saw the queue ahead of her, adrenaline flooded her veins and brought a goofy grin to her face. "S-sure!"

Her orgasm never quite seemed to end, as she forced herself back to the task of serving up hot meals to the *Inyx's* weary crew. The pleasure stayed in her body, a constant current, ebbing and flowing whenever she moved. There was no escaping it. Every rope that dug into Uma's chest, or her hips, or her belly, was a reminder. It all made her shame burn hot, lending a delectable thrill to each and every interaction. Every time someone so much as glanced at Uma, she was forced to ask: did they know? Could they tell?

And she had never felt more alive.

It was just so exciting. Now that her orgasm had thoroughly scrambled Uma's better judgment, she couldn't help but enjoy herself. For so long, every shift had been drudgery. But this was the farthest thing from boring. She was afraid of being discovered, yes, but it was a delicious fear. Something to be savored. For the first time in her life, Uma began to understand why people loved horror movies so much. It was just the same: the agonizing tension, building towards the inevitable plunge.

She couldn't wait.

Uma was still embarrassed and ashamed, of course. Desperately so. She was a pervert. There was no denying it now. It was far too obvious. Instead, she faced a different dilemma. A different contradiction.

Did she really want to keep her uniform hidden? Or did she want to display it for the entire ship to see?

More and more, as Uma fought through her shift, she found herself dwelling on the question. It was an itch, growing and growing by measure. Now that her common sense had been dashed, the notion was all but irresistible. The ghosts of her inhibitions still held her back, warning about what people might think and what it might do to her reputation. But Uma was no longer sure she cared. She just wanted to take that plunge. To be seen. To cast aside the boredom of her life, once and for all.

How would it feel? What kind of look would she see in their eyes? Lust? Shock? Awe? Uma couldn't wait to find out. Every time one of the crewmen glanced up at her, she was shot through with questions.

Could they see through her holographic disguise? Might it flicker

out at just the wrong moment? Or could they hear something in her face? Could they read the unwholesome blush in her cheeks? Could they see the anguished, ecstatic yearning in her eyes?

Questions like that had been eating at Uma all shift. But now, they weren't anxious. They were hopeful.

For some time, she went on like that, serving food to the *Inyx's* crew with hands that trembled more and more with each passing moment. Her arousal grew and grew as the vibrator buzzed within her - but so did her disappointment, as the crewman failed to pay her the suspicion and attention she craved. Eventually, though, one of them paused to address her.

The engineer, Sai Kabir.

"Uma," she said, stepping up to the counter. "A moment of your time? I wanted to speak with you about a few minor inefficiencies and maintenance issues relating to the galley equipment."

A shiver of tension raced up Uma's spine and she nodded, practically drooling as she did. "O-of course."

She was familiar with Sai Kabir. The engineer was always cordial, if not friendly — and recently, it had been impossible not to take note of the way her chest had been bulging out from underneath her shirt. Uma couldn't believe the mild-mannered crewman had been hiding assets like those and she couldn't imagine what had persuaded her to start showing them off — but she had, more than once, been jealous of how the other members of the crew now stared at Kabir. And, secretly, of the blush that rose to Kabir's cheeks when they did.

Now, though, the other woman seemed to be all business.

"As part of our routine checks, in engineering we've been

monitoring the power draw from different sections of the ship,” Kabir told her. “And I noticed some unusual fluctuations relating to your equipment down here. My guess is that the capacitor heating coils have started to suffer ion decay as a result of the unusual radiospheric activity out here on the rim.”

Uma just nodded dumbly, hoping it would seem like she could follow the engineer’s technobabble. In truth, her long words cascaded meaninglessly over the mess officer, adding to the busy noise that filled her head.

“However,” Kabir added, “it’s also possible that it’s due to an adverse feedback loop between your equipment and the surrounding cooling sinks. If they need to draw more power to counteract the ambient heat of the galley, and that power itself produces heat as it encounters resistance in some degraded reactor channels... well, I’m sure you can see the problem.”

“The... p-problem?” Uma panted. Talking was even harder than thinking. “O- of course.”

She really couldn’t. The vibrator in her cunt occupied all of her attention, and every time she twitched, the ropes wrapped around her luscious, plump body seemed to bind even tighter.

“Although...” Kabir’s brow furrowed, and the suggestion of scrutiny made Uma’s heart race. “Perhaps it’s a much more straightforward issue.”

“Y-you think?” Uma forced out. She wanted to moan. She wanted to moan so badly. “What, um, what makes you say-“

Kabir held up a finger to stop her talking. “Can you hear that buzzing noise?”

Uma quivered as another little orgasm tore through her.

“B-b-buzzing noise?” Uma bleated. “That’s n-not... um... I can’t...”

She was grinning. She could feel it. She couldn’t stop herself.

“You can’t?” Kabir suddenly leaned forward, bending over the counter. “It’s right there. Low-pitched. It sounds close. And kind of... wet?”

As she drew closer, Uma felt like her heart was going to explode.

“N-n-no.” Out of instinct, Uma denied it. “I don’t think... I can’t h-hear a-anything! Or maybe it’s the s-s-ship just, um, you know... settling?”

Though she was trying to head the engineer off, another part of her - a larger, deeper part - was begging Sai Kabir to look closer. To notice. To see Uma for what she was: a pervert, getting off on the secret under her hologram.

“It’s not that,” Kabir said at once. “No, it has to be something small. Maybe...” Suddenly, she glanced at Uma’s face and her frown deepened. “Uma, are you alright?”

“O-of course!” Uma squeaked. It was true, in a way. She was on cloud nine. Shame, anxiety, and arousal had all melded together into a dizzying euphoria that she could not escape. It was a kind of madness. “I’m j-j-just... busy!”

As Sai Kabir peered at her, closer and closer, an idea ignited and burned within Uma’s head. What if she just took off the hologram? She could, easily. It was right there, pinned to a rope running along her collar. Then, Kabir would see. She’d know Uma for what she was.

What kind of face would she make? Uma was dying to know.

She couldn't help but be disappointed when Kabir suddenly drew back. "Of course," she said apologetically. "You're working, and I'm bothering you. Forgive me. We can discuss this later when you're not so busy. Perhaps I'll come back and we can find whatever's making that buzzing noise."

"Oh," Uma said faintly.

She glanced at the clock and at the queue in the mess hall. The crowd was already thinning out. Surprisingly, it was beginning to look like Uma was going to make it through the entire shift without anybody discovering the secret of her new uniform.

Uma couldn't take that. She couldn't take being boring again. And so, driven by the never-ending surge of arousal within her, she made a promise to herself.

When the next person came up for their meal, Uma was going to take off the hologram covering her up.

Sai Kabir departed, and the next member of the crew started to approach. Seconds stretched out to what felt like an eternity. During each heartbeat, Uma was tormented by the knowledge of everything she had to lose if she went through with it — and everything she had to lose if she didn't.

In the end, it was a snap decision. Before her better judgment could prevail, Uma's hand reached up and snatched the miniature projector away from her collar.

The veil fell. In the brief moment before Uma's vision became nothing more than a white blur, she saw the crewman's eyes widen in palpable awe.

Uma knew at once what the other woman was seeing: Uma's true

self. The fat, bounteously curvy woman was, all over, tied up with ropes that made an unmistakable spectacle of her body. The crimson strands made a gorgeous contrast with her pale skin, making it look all the softer, all the more inviting. Her physique's proportions, already mouth-wateringly plush, were only further accentuated by all the places in which the shibari ties pulled taut against Uma's body. She looked incredible. She looked like erotic art.

But that was just the beginning.

Far more striking than simply her body was the look on Uma's face. The look of unrepentant, ravenous need in her eyes. The shameful blush in her cheeks that made the perverse fetishism of her appearance undeniable. The way her lips were parted and wet, quivering with each panted breath. It made it all so clear. This wasn't an accident or a mistake. Not something Uma had been forced into. This was something she loved. Something she craved. Now, everybody knew.

And there was no going back.

For Uma Vilchis, that was the best part of all.

Once her vision eventually cleared, she was finally able to get a good look at the woman standing in front of her. The woman she'd exposed herself to. It was Alara Hisarlik, the ship's counselor.

"My, my," the counselor purred. "What is the meaning of this, mess officer?"

Uma had no answer for her. She should have been terrified. Instead, the look of vicious, predatory interest in Alara's eyes only heightened her pleasure.

She wasn't boring. Not anymore.

More and more of the other crew members in the mess were starting to turn their heads and gawk at Uma. Some of them whispered, or blushed, or pointed. Uma welcomed it all. If not for the toy already in her cunt, she would have been touching herself.

“I think our sweet mess officer is experiencing some kind of... incident,” Alara announced loudly, licking her lips. “She’ll come with me to my quarters. I’ll take care of her. Don’t worry, Miss Vilchis. I’m told my new hypnotherapy program can be terribly effective.”

Uma nodded mutely. She could sense the intent behind Alara’s words. Clearly, this was no longer the wholesome, friendly counselor she remembered chatting with. That was perfectly fine with Uma. She welcomed whatever depraved plans Alara had in store for her.

It was just the kind of excitement she needed.

But as the two of them exited the mess hall and made for the turbolifts, Wasp appeared once again. Uma stood at attention, ready for her uniform to be inspected, but it wasn’t her Wasp had eyes for. The hacker grabbed Alara by the shoulders and hissed manically to her co-conspirator.

“Alara!” Wasp said. “We need to talk. Something big is happening.”

“Not now.” Alara shrugged her off. “I’ve just found a new subject.”

“No time!” Wasp shot back. “You can get to her later. This is huge!”

Alara frowned. “What is it? What’s happening?”

Wasp licked her lips, and Uma could tell if the look of mania in her eyes was born from fear or glee.

“I just intercepted a transmission,” she told Alara. “An admiral is coming to inspect the *Inyx*.”

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Admiral Portia Stoyer took the onset of artificial gravity in stride as she descended the boarding ramp from her personal, high-spec shuttle down into the hangar bay of the *Inyx*. It had been a long journey out to the rim, and it was always a relief to be back under gravity—even if, now that her hair was turning gray, some of her joints seemed to prefer the weightlessness of the void. But Admiral Stoyer had absolutely no plans to retire yet. She remained razor sharp, and she knew her reputation as the hard-ass who had mentored Captain Vasser preceded her. For her and her protégé in the Alliance starfleet, there were still a lot of rungs left to climb.

Especially now that Captain Vasser had successfully captured Wasp, the most infamous vandal-hacker in the Alliance.

Admiral Stoyer had received the transmission while she was already en route. Sure enough, upon her arrival, she'd seen Wasp's infamous ship just across the hangar bay. Presumably now, with its mission complete, the *Inyx* would soon be returning to populated space, but she had decided to carry out her inspection regardless. It was merited after such an arduous tour, and there was nothing wrong with letting the victorious crew take a victory lap in front of a member of the Admiralty.

Not that she'd go easy on them, of course. An inspection was still an inspection, and Admiral Stoyer knew that, in her neat, highly-decorated uniform, she cut a formidable figure. Once the venting coolant steam cleared, she expected to see only the most upright

backs and stiffest salutes from the honor guard that would be there to greet her.

Instead of an honor guard, though, at the bottom of the ramp, only one person was waiting for the admiral. A woman she recognized from the crew files as the ship's doctor, Yuzuko Hiraga.

"Doctor Hiraga, I believe?" the admiral called out, stepping off the ramp, face pressed into a displeased frown. "There better be a good reason you're the only one who—"

She paused to deepen her frown as she took note of what the doctor was wearing.

The long, white lab coat was regulation. The garment Dr. Hiraga had on underneath was anything but. It was a bodysuit that covered her from neck to ankles, and clung to her form so tightly it was plainly completely inappropriate for a medical professional. But what truly caught Admiral Stoyer's eye was the way the strange, featureless bodysuit reflected the hangar bay's rows of dim, blue, artificial lights up and down her torso. It was made of some kind of taut material—Rubber? Latex? The admiral wasn't sure—and polished to a mirror shine, lending it an unfamiliar, almost alien look. An undeniably fetishistic look, too.

The doctor was even wearing high heels, equally polished and reflective. Heels! It was ridiculous.

"Admiral Stoyer." Dr. Hiraga saluted the admiral with perfect form, as if nothing were amiss. "It's a pleasure to welcome you aboard the *Inyx*, ma'am."

"I'd say 'it's a pleasure to be here', but that now appears to be in doubt," Admiral Stoyer replied testily. "Doctor, before I express my displeasure with your flagrant disregard for uniform regulations, how about you explain to me why Captain Vasser isn't here to greet

me?”

Irritatingly, the icy glare that had ruined the day of many an Alliance cadet failed to make the doctor flinch. “She sends her apologies,” Dr. Hiraga said calmly. “Unfortunately, an alien pathogen has recently been detected aboard the ship. To minimize the risk of infection, the captain decided that I should meet you alone so that I can administer the countermeasure.”

“An alien pathogen?” Admiral Stoyer narrowed her eyes. “That wasn’t in any of the reports.”

The doctor remained unfazed. When Admiral Stoyer studied her more closely, the only thing she could read in Dr. Hiraga’s face was the faintest hint of a pink, somewhat lurid blush in her cheeks. Was she getting off on what she was wearing?

“May I administer the inoculation?” Dr. Hiraga asked, smiling.

“Inoculation?” Something about this was setting Admiral Stoyer’s nerves on edge. It had been a few years since her last combat and her instincts were growing dull, but perhaps they were trying to tell her something.

“A simple procedure.” Dr. Hiraga reached into one of the pockets of her lab coat and pulled out a medical device; a hypospray with a long, wickedly pointed tip. “It’ll only take a moment.”

For a long moment, Admiral Stoyer considered arguing. All of this was, after all, entirely against standard procedure. Something was obviously wrong aboard the *Inyx*—but, she reasoned, if there truly was an alien pathogen, perhaps the captain had seen fit to impose unusual measures. Limiting contact made sense. Dr. Hiraga’s bodysuit still didn’t, but Admiral Stoyer hadn’t come all this way to argue with a mere medical officer. Better, she decided, to simply get this over with and proceed with her inspection.

At the end of the day, Yvonne Vasser was a top-notch commanding officer. Admiral Stoyer was sure she could trust her to have matters under control.

“Very well,” Admiral Stoyer said gruffly. “Make it quick, doctor.”

“Of course.” The blush in Dr. Hiraga’s cheeks deepened as she stepped toward the admiral and brandished the hypospray. “In your ear, if you please. And don’t worry. I assure you, the implant is completely painless.”

A few minutes later, Admiral Stoyer came back to herself. She was still standing on the same spot, but she was struck with the sudden awareness that she had lost time. It was as if she had just fallen asleep and woken back up. Her vision was stained with swirling, bright patterns, like the kind she might see behind her eyelids if she closed them after staring straight into a bright light, and her ears rang with an unfamiliar voice, the memory of which was already slipping away from her.

It had to be the procedure, Admiral Stoyer decided. Painless, perhaps, but clearly not free of all discomfort. That was something else she’d need to have words with Dr. Hiraga about later.

Something... else?

Admiral Stoyer frowned. For a moment, that strange voice in her ear seemed to surge, becoming deafening, whispering suggestions to her—although somehow the words themselves remained indistinct. The colors surged too, and the admiral briefly lost track of her own thoughts as the world around her seemed to fade away, and she was left floating in space, staring at a great, shifting spiral as if she was looking down from above the galactic plane itself.

Then the moment passed, and Admiral Stoyer was left picking

up the pieces of herself.

Something else? What else? What else about Dr. Yuzuko Hiraga might give Admiral Stoyer cause for complaint? She couldn't seem to remember. When she looked at the doctor with fresh eyes, hoping to remind herself, Admiral Stoyer certainly couldn't find anything to pull her up on.

Dr. Hiraga was every inch the perfect Alliance medical officer. Her fetish latex bodysuit was precisely tight and taut enough to show off her shapely tits and gorgeous thighs, and it had been studiously polished to a faultless sheen. And her heels! They were six-inch platform heels, and lent Dr. Hiraga both an eye-catching height and an unmistakably sultry fuck-me gait that she carried off without the slightest hint of faltering.

It was all completely normal for an Alliance starship's medical officer.

Exemplary, even. Dr. Hiraga was the very model of a ship's doctor. As Admiral Stoyer considered her appearance, she found her mood softening. A little discomfort and disorientation following a necessary medical procedure wasn't the doctor's fault, and it would be childish to hold it against her. Admiral Stoyer decided to favor her with a rare, slight smile.

"Thank you, doctor," Admiral Stoyer said. She found herself suddenly in a charitable mood. "I'm grateful to you for your diligent performance of your duties in these difficult circumstances. I can see that you've dealt with this alien pathogen with the utmost care. I shall personally see to it that you're commended for it."

"T-thank you, ma'am."

Admiral Stoyer had expected a smile, but not the breathless gasp of barely-constrained pleasure that escaped Dr. Hiraga's lips. It was

as if she was both guilty, and drawing pleasure from her own guilt. Admiral Stoyer's smile widened. It did her heart good to see a junior officer taking such obvious reward from her superior's praise. It was just as it should be.

"However," Admiral Stoyer qualified, "it remains to be seen whether the rest of this ship still performs at those same high standards—especially given the unorthodox way I have been greeted. I will expect a full report."

"Of course, ma'am," Dr. Hiraga replied, pulling herself together and saluting. "I'll take you to Captain Vasser at once."

"No," Admiral Stoyer countered. "Take me to the prisoner instead. Interrogating Wasp is of the highest priority."

"Oh, well," Dr. Hiraga said, a touch mysteriously. "Either way, I'll be taking you to the same place."

Before Admiral Stoyer could ask that she explain herself, the doctor turned and began leading her away, her heels clacking loudly on the deck beneath as she walked. The admiral quickly made to follow her. Everything, she decided, would become clear in time.

"The nearest turbolifts are out of order," Dr. Hiraga said, as they stepped out of the hangar bay and into the ship's bulkheads. "I'm afraid we will need to walk a little."

"That's fine," Admiral Stoyer told her. "All the better to see how things are running around here."

Sure enough, as they walked, they passed various other members of the crew as they rushed from place to place in pursuit of their regular duties. Each one, without fail, took note of Admiral Stoyer's uniform and rank and greeted her with a crisp salute. The admiral could find no fault in their conduct, even if some of them seemed to

be behaving a little strangely with one another. More than a few of them were wearing unusual items of clothing or carrying strange items, and members of the crew that were in pairs or groups often seemed unusually close and touchy with one another. The atmosphere aboard the *Inyx* was strange; charged, somehow, but it was nothing Admiral Stoyer could put her finger on and nothing that violated Alliance regulations.

Until they ran across the *Inyx*'s second-in-command, Lieutenant Kuznetzov.

Admiral Stoyer had met the lieutenant once before, when the *Inyx* had first been commissioned into service. She had immediately formed a positive impression of the woman. Kuznetzov had struck Admiral Stoyer in two ways: first as a serious, no-nonsense, highly-professional commander, and secondly, as a handsome, butch woman with a stark, spartan sense of style.

The woman standing before Admiral Stoyer now no longer matched either of those descriptions.

Lieutenant Kuznetzov and her companion were leaning against a nearby bulkhead, and the lieutenant's outfit and pose made it perfectly clear that she was trying to attract attention to herself. She was wearing a short, skimpy, frilly minidress that was, it seemed, somehow meant to serve as a uniform; it carried all the appropriate markings and trimmings, even if in form it was wildly inappropriate. The lieutenant was wearing heeled sandals with them, and was leaning on the wall with one leg propped up against it, her back arched to accentuate her figure. She had grown out her hair markedly and, most strikingly of all, was wearing a full face of makeup. She didn't look like an Alliance commander. She looked like a woman who was out at a bar and didn't intend to go home alone.

But strangely, it was clear that Lieutenant Kuznetzov was utterly

wracked with shame about everything she was doing. Her face was entirely scarlet, and she twitched whenever anybody so much as looked at her. It was almost as if she was being forced to present herself this way against her will—but as Admiral Stoyer watched, a passing crewman wolf-whistled at her, and Lieutenant Kuznetsov moaned softly in response. And beneath the skirt of her dress, Admiral Stoyer was sure it was Kuznetsov's own dripping wetness that left her thighs slick and sticky.

There was no doubt about it. She was getting off on it.

“Lieutenant Kuznetsov!” Admiral Stoyer called out sharply, coming to a halt. She was far too appalled by this behavior to let it pass without comment. “What is the meaning of this?”

She frowned as, in response to her scrutiny, Lieutenant Kuznetsov both shrank into herself and shivered with rapturous pleasure. But before the lieutenant could speak, her companion answered for her.

“What does it look like?” the other woman laughed, smirking maliciously as she reached over and slipped an arm across Lieutenant Kuznetsov's shoulder. “Turns out, LT-K here is a real feminization freak. It drives her wild. Can you believe it?”

Admiral Stoyer's frown broke into an outright scowl as she turned to regard the dirtbag who had, it seemed, been hitting on Lieutenant Kuznetsov. She looked a little messy and more than a little tomboyish, and her red uniform indicated she was nothing more than a petty crewman. How dare she speak to an admiral that way?

“What's your name, crewman?” Admiral Stoyer growled.

“Lori Delaney, ma'am,” Crewman Delaney threw out. “Fraid you'll have to find your own fun, if that's what you're looking for. I

saw her first. Isn't that right, Semya?"

Lieutenant Kuznetsov blushed and squeaked at Delaney's insubordinate use of her name, and then moaned loudly as the petty crewman reached even further around her to rest her hand on her chest and start groping it wantonly. Admiral Stoyer wasn't sure what disgusted her most: how incapable Kuznetsov was of standing up for herself, or how openly she was enjoying this rough treatment.

What was going on aboard this ship? And why did none of the other crewmen who kept passing by seem to regard all this as anything out of the ordinary?

"I don't know what the hell you think you're talking about," Admiral Stoyer bellowed, "but I can promise you, crewman, you're gonna get hell for this kind of behavior! You think this is funny? I know for a fact that Captain Vasser doesn't tolerate this kind of bullshit on her ship!"

"Vasser?" Delaney snorted, still smirking with impunity. "Oh boy. That's cute. You really have no idea." She paused for a moment, looked at Admiral Stoyer more closely, then suddenly leaned in with a swaggering, leering grin on her face. "Say, you're actually kind of my type. I love stuck-up command crew chicks. Bet you've got a killer body under that admiral's getup. How about you just get in line? As soon as I've satisfied Semya, I'd love to take you for a walk on the wild side."

Admiral Stoyer's fury burned incandescent. She was just about ready to raise a hand to the crewman.

"Forget a write-up," she snarled. "Forget being drummed out. I'll see to it that you spend the rest of the voyage in the brig—and worse, after that you'll—"

Her voice died away when that other voice, the one whispering

from inside her head, rose to meet it.

The colors, too. It was back again, dancing before Admiral Stoyer's eyes. That spiral. That vast spiral. It drew her in with a force stronger than any gravity, and shone with such a compelling, ever-shifting light that Admiral Stoyer's efforts to make out the words being poured in her ears were utterly forgotten.

For a brief moment, though, as her eyes unfocused and her muscles slackened, Admiral Stoyer felt herself on the verge of a strange kind of clarity. A distinct sense of wrongness crept up her spine, warning her that something—everything—was terribly distorted. It was an instinct born of years of combat. Admiral Stoyer reached for it, but it slipped out of grasp before she could seize it, and then it pulled away, deeper and deeper, leaving her squirming, helpless, and anxious, until she-

Until she woke up again.

Admiral Stoyer's brow twitched. What had just happened? A dizzy spell, perhaps? A small side-effect of the doctor's procedure?

The admiral shrugged it off. It was nothing.

There were far more pressing matters at hand. Crewman Lori Delaney was still looking at the admiral expectantly, a dirty, shit-eating grin on her face. Anger—or rather, the memory of anger—rose within Admiral Stoyer.

What had Delaney been saying? That she wanted to fuck her?

The anger faded. Why would Admiral Stoyer get angry about that? It was perfectly normal.

Traditional, even. Finding a captain or admiral extremely

fuckable was just another form of loyalty. What kind of commander didn't want to be admired like that? Admiral Stoyer could see that Semya Kuznetzov certainly did. And why not? She was hot, and the admiral was sure having a pretty, pliable femme like her around was good for morale.

"Well?" Delaney asked, staring nakedly at the admiral's body. "Want to let me show you a good time, hot stuff?"

"Maybe later," Admiral Stoyer replied good-naturedly. Her face relaxed. "I'm afraid that right now I must see to Vasser and the prisoner."

Delaney threw back her head and howled with filthy laughter. "Fucking fantastic. She's got to you already, huh? I love it. It's always hottest with the stern discipline types. Can't wait to see what 'the prisoner' makes out of you."

Admiral Stoyer laughed along with her, even though the joke eluded her. She was very pleased to see Captain Vasser had managed to keep her crew in such high spirits, even on such a long and tiresome mission. Along with the quality of her medical officer, it attested to her mettle as a leader.

"Shall we keep going, ma'am?" offered Dr. Hiraga, who had been waiting patiently from a few paces away.

"Yes, of course," Admiral Stoyer replied, turning away. "Goodbye, crewman. And Lieutenant Kuznetzov, I'm sure we will speak further soon."

Lieutenant Kuznetzov nodded and tried to offer a salute, but she collapsed moaning into Lori Delaney's arms when the petty crewman snaked a hand under her skirt and started finger-fucking her cunt.

As Admiral Stoyer and Dr. Hiraga walked away, the corridor was filled with the sounds of sex, and the admiral failed to suppress a smile. It did her heart good to see such a virile crew.

After walking a little further through the *Inyx's* winding depths, an open door and a strange conversation caught Admiral Stoyer's attention and called her to a halt.

"As you stare into my pocket watch," someone was saying, in a voice that was deep yet feminine, lightly accented, and utterly assured, "and as you take deeper and deeper breaths, you feel all strength draining from your limbs. From your muscles. Leaving you weaker and weaker."

Admiral Stoyer paused and peered into the open cabin. Two women were inside; one of them, she knew immediately to be Samira Carter, the *Inyx's* security officer. There was no mistaking her; the woman was built like a bull and was wearing a simple tank top to better show off her physique. It was the kind of thing Admiral Stoyer usually rolled her eyes at. Security officers were the same on every ship.

This time, though, she could only stare in wide-eyed surprise at what was going on. The other woman she only vaguely recognized from the *Inyx's* crew files. She was the counselor, Admiral Stoyer thought. Alara something. She had only glanced at the listings of non-combat roles. In any case, she was an older woman with rich, brown hair, tanned skin, and a matronly figure.

None of that was unusual. What was unusual was what she was doing to Chief Carter. The counselor was swinging a pocket watch steadily in front of the chief's face with a look of utmost, sadistic glee writ large on her features. Chief Carter's expression, by contrast, registered nothing more than slack, helpless emptiness. In one hand, in her upturned palm, she was holding a small book that the counselor seemed to have given her. Strangely, Chief Carter seemed

to be straining every muscle just to keep it aloft. It was as if, to her, it weighed as much as a colossal dumbbell.

“Weaker and weaker,” Alara repeated. There was a distinct, rhythmic quality to her words that tugged at Admiral Stoyer’s awareness, like the undertow of a powerful river. It sent chills down her spine. “With each passing moment. You’re finding you can barely lift your hand, aren’t you? All that strength, all those muscles you’ve been building—it’s all useless, isn’t it?” The sinister glint in Alara’s eyes made her look like the farthest thing from a benevolent counselor. “You’re so pathetically weak, Chief Carter.”

Her words had a profound effect on the hypnotized chief. As Alara spoke, Chief Carter seemed, indeed, to grow weaker and weaker. She quivered and shook, like her muscles were reaching the very limits of her strength. After just a few moments, her arm began to sink, forced by gravity to bring the small book lower and lower, all while the security chief sweated and strained as hard as she could.

Seeing such a strong woman overcome by mere words was already shocking. But not nearly as shocking as the fact that Chief Carter was so clearly turned on by the experience.

Beneath the blank, slack mask of her face, it was unmistakable. She glowed with arousal, and Admiral Stoyer could tell the sweat drenching her body was from more than just struggle. This was something obscene. Something twisted. The admiral was sure of it, and she couldn’t tolerate such depravity going on in plain sight on an Alliance starship.

She took a step toward the cabin doorway, ready to raise her voice acrimoniously.

Until the spiral appeared before her eyes, and once again drained away all of her thoughts. A whispering, indistinct voice stole away her feelings, too, leaving Admiral Stoyer little more than a blank

slate onto which the voice could impart an entirely new set of sensibilities.

A few moments later, once Admiral Stoyer came to, she looked through the cabin doorway—and a broad smile came to her face.

It was truly touching to see that the *Inyx* had a counselor who was so passionate and so engaged with the crew.

Admiral Stoyer had, at first, been taken aback by the open door. It had struck her as a lapse of privacy. But now she was realizing that the counselor's openness was, in fact, a virtue. She quite literally had an open-door policy—what better way than to encourage the crew to be open about their psychological issues? It was a new approach, and surely very progressive.

Just like whatever she was doing with Chief Carter. Admiral Stoyer didn't fully understand, but she couldn't help but be impressed. She'd have to ask Alara about it later. For now, though, she was reluctant to disturb the pair. As Alara gripped Chief Carter's chin and forced her to her knees, whimpering and as helpless as a newborn kitten, Admiral Stoyer turned away contentedly and left the two of them to their therapy.

"My apologies, doctor," Admiral Stoyer said, catching up to Dr. Hiraga. "My inspection distracts me—although I'm sure you'll be pleased to hear that I'm struggling to find cause for complaint."

"I certainly am, ma'am," Dr. Hiraga replied. Her mouth was a crooked, lopsided line, like she was struggling to maintain her grip on her guilt and arousal. It was as if she was drawing a kind of twisted pleasure from leading Admiral Stoyer deeper into the bowels of the *Inyx*. From leading her closer and closer to Wasp. "Shall we continue?"

"Of course. Take me straight to the prisoner."

After a little more walking, they reached a set of turbolifts. Dr. Hiraga led Admiral Stoyer inside and, curiously, punched in a command to take them to the bridge deck. Admiral Stoyer's brow furrowed. Surely they ought to have been heading down, toward the brig? She elected not to question the doctor, though. So far, she had proven to be an excellent guide. The admiral was sure Dr. Hiraga was taking her exactly where she needed to go.

Soon enough, the lift arrived at the bridge deck and both of them stepped out. As they headed toward the bridge, Admiral Stoyer couldn't help but notice that the behavior of the *Inyx's* crew members was becoming more and more unorthodox. The admiral kept noticing crewmen who were blatantly, obscenely flouting uniform regulations in a dizzying range of different ways. Groups of them were clustering together, pressed up against one another, passionately engaged in activities Admiral Stoyer couldn't even fathom. The corridors of the *Inyx* were filled with sounds of kissing and tonguing and the scent of sex—and it seemed to the admiral that the chain of command meant little with regard to who was taking the lead in any of the crew's activities.

All of it bothered Admiral Stoyer. But she wasn't sure why. She couldn't seem to put her finger on it. All of what she was seeing was perfectly normal, wasn't it?

Perhaps Captain Vasser would be able to explain everything. Admiral Stoyer had intended to speak to Wasp first, but now that Dr. Hiraga had led her to the bridge, she was a little unsure whether or not she should expect to see the captain right now.

Once the two of them stepped through the door and onto the bridge, everything became nightmarishly clear.

The bridge was an orgiastic riot of fetishism and flesh. As she set foot into the space, the penny dropped—but even as the horror of

the situation dawned on Admiral Stoyer, she was so stunned, she could do nothing but stare in open-mouthed shock. Everywhere she looked, crewmen were fucking. Every surface was slick and sticky with sweat and other bodily fluids, or else covered in heaving, intertwined bodies. Most of them were doing things the admiral had thought only existed in the imaginations of pornographers.

And all of them, when Admiral Stoyer looked closely, turned out to have strange, blank expressions on their faces, and their eyes shone with a spiraling inner light that suggested they were not at all in control of themselves.

“What...” Admiral Stoyer gasped as, for the first time in her career, she was truly lost for words. “What the...”

She turned to Dr. Hiraga, hoping, at least, for some kind of solidarity in shock, but she found the doctor completely unmoved by what was happening on the bridge. If anything, she seemed to be enjoying it. The look on her face was one of dreamy, lurid fascination.

The admiral glanced down at what the doctor was wearing. Why hadn’t she noticed how strange it was? Why hadn’t that registered with her earlier? It was as if she’d been sleepwalking—until the shock of what was happening on the bridge had jolted her awake.

Clearly, Dr. Hiraga wasn’t the only senior member of the crew to have succumbed to whatever madness had gripped the *Inyx*. Scanning the bridge, multiple familiar faces stood out to Admiral Stoyer from the crowd.

Penny Morgan, the science officer, was making a performance of herself, strutting about and posing while dressed up in a ridiculous, frilly, brightly-colored costume that had no place on a starship. She was leading around a small crowd of other women, all of whom were dressed similarly, conducting and choreographing

them in some kind of twisted, unmistakably erotic performance.

Uma Vilchis, who Admiral Stoyer faintly remembered as the mess officer, was dressed up in almost nothing at all except for a set of intricate red ropes that were bound taut around her plump physique. She had been placed at the helm, at the focal point of the entire room, posed like a statue, inviting attention—and from the wetness dripping down her soft legs, it was clear she was eagerly enjoying it all.

A promising young engineer whose file had caught Admiral Stoyer's eye—Sai Kabir, she believed she was called—was there too. She was naked from the waist up and bent over a command station so that her obscenely large tits hung down from her like a cow's udders. Other members of the crew kept walking up to her and groping, squeezing, sucking, slapping—whatever they pleased, or else simply pointing and staring in lascivious awe. Each and every reaction made Engineer Kabir squirm and writhe with mad, shameful pleasure.

Each, somehow, was more obscene than the last. But the greatest spectacle of all was in the dead center of the bridge. Once she looked at the captain's chair, Admiral Stoyer found she could not look away.

In it, in the eye of a pornographic storm, conducting the madness, sat the one and only Wasp.

Admiral Stoyer recognized her immediately from her techno-punk trappings and her distinctive shock of neon green hair. Wasp recognized Admiral Stoyer too; that much was immediately clear from the smug grin on her face. She was sitting in the captain's chair with complete ease, slouched back, legs spread wide apart. One of the *Inyx's* crew was kneeling in front of her, licking her tall, heeled boots. That made the admiral's skin crawl.

"Oh, hey, boss lady," Wasp threw out, with impossible smugness.

“Didn’t even see you come in.”

As Admiral Stoyer stared at the hacker, she felt her forehead pulsating dangerously and her eyes beginning to bulge. The scene before her was something akin to sacrilege. She couldn’t tolerate it.

“Get out of that chair,” the admiral growled, though her words were barely audible over the obscene sounds that filled the bridge.

“What was that?” Wasp drawled. “Anyway, sorry for not rolling out the red carpet! I know you’re the cap’s boss, but the thing is, since I arrived I’ve been having way too much fun to-“

“Get the hell out of that chair!” Admiral Stoyer bellowed with such force it silenced the hacker. “That seat belongs to one person, and one person alone: Captain Yvonne Vasser. She damn well earned it! And I’m sure when she finds you sitting in it, you’re gonna have hell to pay from her and me both!”

Infuriatingly, Wasp didn’t so much as quiver. She simply shrugged and gestured down to the floor in front of her.

“Actually, I don’t think she’ll mind,” she said. “But if you really want, you can ask her yourself.”

Her gesture prompted Admiral Stoyer to look more closely at the woman kneeling in front of Wasp. Once she peered through the layers of sweat and drool, through the perverse fanaticism on her face, through the blank, brainwashed look in her eyes, she realized—it was Captain Vasser. Licking Wasp’s boot like it was her life’s greatest pleasure.

It was then that the true danger of the situation became clear. If a woman as formidable as Yvonne Vasser could succumb to this madness, then anyone could.

Even Admiral Stoyer herself.

At once, she made a decision. She would not indulge Wasp's villainy for a moment longer. The admiral was outnumbered, but she could still take the hacker by surprise. And she had her blaster on her hip.

Admiral Stoyer whipped her hand around to draw. As soon as her fingertips touched her weapon, it happened again.

The spiral.

The admiral blinked suddenly, confused by the strange blip in her awareness. How much time had just passed? What had just happened? Had she fallen asleep or something? Why was her head throbbing, filled with auras of strange, swirling colors?

And why was her hand on her blaster?

Admiral Stoyer took a deep breath and then made herself relax. She couldn't fathom why she seemed so tense.

Everything was perfectly normal.

"I'm... I'm so sorry," the admiral said, a touch embarrassed. "I think I was... um..."

"A little confused?" Wasp supplied. Admiral Stoyer nodded gratefully. "Don't mention it."

"Thank you," Admiral Stoyer replied. "I can see that I'll have nothing but praise to put in my report to the admiral's board. The *Inyx* complies, as ever, with the highest standards of the Alliance."

The admiral wasn't sure why Wasp started laughing at her. It was

perfectly true.

The Alliance had always prized itself on its commitment to its values—chief among them, respect for individual rights and the rules of engagement. That was why it was only natural to put a prisoner in the captain's chair, and to put them in charge of the ship.

What was the alternative? Keeping them locked in the brig? Telling *them* what to do? No. It was inhumane. Unthinkable.

This was the right way to handle a prisoner. Admiral Stoyer was truly proud of her protégé for recognizing as much.

Admittedly, however, Captain Vasser's behavior still bothered her a little. "Excuse me," Admiral Stoyer ventured politely, pointing. "Why is the captain doing that? Doesn't she have more important matters to attend to?"

Once again, Wasp simply laughed. "No way," she scoffed. "She's not even the captain anymore."

Admiral Stoyer frowned. "She's not?"

"Nope." Wasps shrugged. "I, uh... what do you military types call it... relieved her of her duties!"

"Oh." Admiral Stoyer nodded slowly. "Then, she's—"

"I made her the *Inyx's* Sexual Relief Officer." Wasp's grin turned wider and more wicked than ever. She sat forward in her chair, as if daring Admiral Stoyer to question her authority. She moved her feet around in doing so, forcing Vasser to scamper to plant her lips back on her boot. "She's responsible for the sexual needs of every single woman in this ship."

“Oh.” After a moment, the confused expression on Admiral Stoyer’s face melted away into a bright smile. “Of course. Naturally.”

In all honesty, the admiral felt foolish for having questioned it. She ought to have known better. Ensuring the crew had someone to fuck whenever they needed was a basic logistical requirement. It was indispensable for the proper functioning of any Alliance ship, and having an officer assigned specifically to the role was simply common sense. For the *Inyx* to have left port without one was quite the oversight.

It was very kind of Wasp to have ensured that position was filled. And it was characteristically diligent of Yvonne Vasser to have taken to her new post with such obvious, ravenous enthusiasm.

“Actually,” Wasp said, her voice tinged with something distinctly predatory. “Now that you’re on *my* ship, admiral, I think I’m going to have to assign you to the same position. Nothing personal, you understand. It’s just that I think you’ll be a perfect fit. And besides.” Somehow, her grin stretched wider still. “I have two boots.”

Without so much as an instant of hesitation, Admiral Stoyer stood at attention, saluted, and returned Wasp’s grin. “Happy to pitch in!” she announced.

And she was. In truth, at her age, she was extremely flattered to be given the assignment. Admiral Stoyer got down on her knees in front of Wasp. She could see to the rest of the crew later; it was simply common sense that, as a prisoner, Wasp’s needs came first. If she wanted her boots licked, that was exactly what Admiral Stoyer would do. It was only proper, for an Alliance admiral.

As in all things, she’d be sure to show ex-Captain Vasser how it was done.

When she pressed her lips to Wasp’s other boot, the hacker sat

back in her chair and sighed contentedly. She was so glad to be here in the flesh at long last. Flitting about as a hologram had been fun, but it got old fast. Knowing she was making Vasser and her old boss kiss her feet was one thing. Feeling it was quite another.

And sitting in the captain's chair of an Alliance starship, with all of its crew brainwashed to serve her? That was truly on another level.

Wasp could scarcely believe it had all started with one little human vulnerability: Captain Vasser's all-consuming hypno fetish. Thanks only to that, Wasp had been able to leverage access to the ship's holodeck into complete access to all of the ship's systems and personnel.

The rest had been easy.

But what now? Wasp had never been one to rest on her laurels. She was always interested in the next gig. The next thrill.

Fortunately, one had fallen right into her lap.

She looked down at Admiral Stoyer, who now seemed to be competing with Captain Vasser over who could more eagerly lick her boots. The admiral had been just as easy as all the rest, but that didn't mean seeing her like this wasn't fun. Moreover, as an admiral, Stoyer had the kind of access Captain Vasser could only dream of.

Access to other ships. Access to space stations. Access to entire fleets.

And access to the Alliance's entire holonet.

The mere thought was enough to stir Wasp to arousal and have her rubbing herself between her legs as she surveyed the decadence and debauchery going on all around her.

Oh yes. This was just the beginning.

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